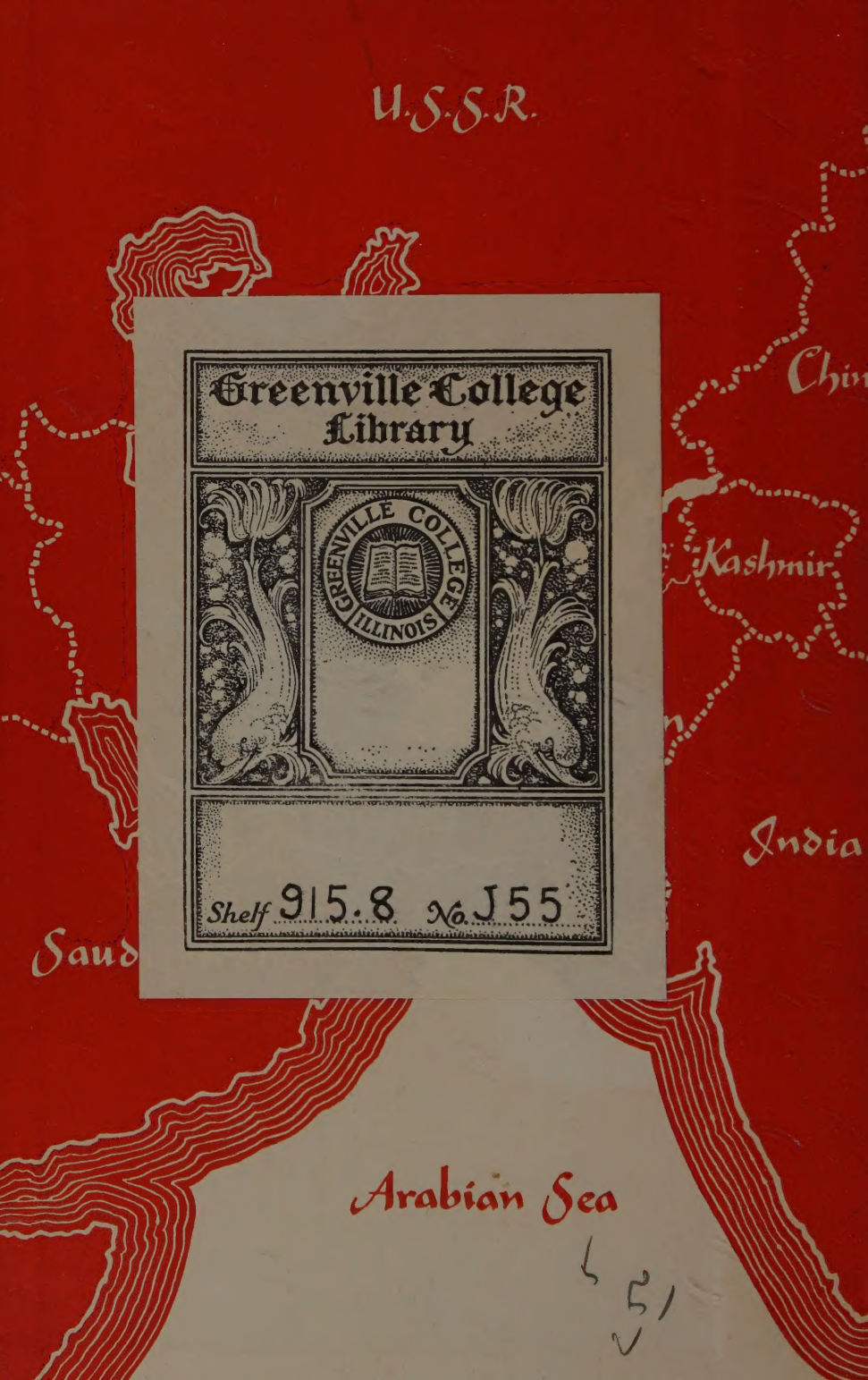
افغانستان



Greenville College
Library

GREENVILLE COLLEGE
ILLINOIS

Shelf 915.8 No. J55

L 51

JABAL-US-SIRAJ
JALALABAD
HERAT
KABUL
KHYBER PASS
PESHAWAR
GHAZNI
KANDAHAR
LAHORE

An American Engineer in AFGHANISTAN

An American Engineer in AFGHANISTAN

FROM THE LETTERS AND NOTES OF

A. C. Jewett

edited by

MARJORIE JEWETT BELL

THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA PRESS · MINNEAPOLIS
LONDON · GEOFFREY CUMBERLEGE · OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

GREENVILLE COLLEGE
LIBRARY
GREENVILLE, ILLINOIS

Copyright 1948 by the
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form without the written permission of the publisher. Permission is hereby granted to reviewers to quote brief passages in a review to be printed in a magazine or newspaper.

PRINTED AT THE NORTH CENTRAL PUBLISHING COMPANY, ST. PAUL

Preface

FOR years holding to a policy of isolation, allowing entrance only with the Amir's permission, the remote mountain kingdom of Afghanistan in Central Asia with its Persian-Mohammedan culture is still one of the little-known countries of the East. The legend of Afghanistan as the "forbidden country" grew chiefly from a warning of the British Government of India which once guarded the Afghan frontier north of the Khyber — "It is absolutely forbidden to cross this border into Afghanistan."

But Afghanistan has never seemed unusual to me. Mr. A. C. Jewett, the American engineer in Afghanistan, was my uncle, and he corresponded with me regularly from there when I was able to write my first letters. For over ten years he was my friend and adviser, always with the same untiring interest that was so much a part of everything he did. His letters were sent to me after his death, and the rest — notes, diaries, and pictures — were given to me from his trunk in an attic in Fresno, California.

When he entered with an escort supplied by the Amir for his safe transport to Kabul, he was the first American permitted to live in Afghanistan since 1880. He served as the chief engineer of the Amir, Habibullah Khan, from 1911 to 1919, in charge of installing a hydroelectric plant for Kabul. In this capacity he worked with the natives, was a guest in their homes, learned to speak Persian, the official language of the country, and knew the Amir and all his ministers personally. To tell his story of the Afghans, I have made use of all the material he had collected, including letters from the Amir, the muin-us-sultana, and Mr. Miller, a Scotchman in

26497

charge of the woolen mills. The rewriting and editing I have done were employed to make smoother transitions throughout the manuscript, to place items in proper sequence, and to bring a few chapters into manuscript form. The pictures are his own, with the exception of those credited to Mr. Crawford in the List of Illustrations.

Since 1929 a new era has opened for the twelve million people of Afghanistan. The present constitutional monarchy was established in 1932, and today the little mountain kingdom has launched a $450,000,000 program to build public works and industries and to modernize the government and the educational system. Afghanistan was admitted to the United Nations in 1944. The years since then have seen an influx of Americans—technical advisers, industrial engineers, contractors, and skilled workmen—to plan and promote these improvements, which are destined to bring about a revolution in the industry and living of the Afghans.

From the time of Abdur Rahman, who consolidated the many tribes of his kingdom into one nation, to the Afghan invasion of India in 1919, Afghan foreign affairs were controlled by the British Government of India. The old Amir compared himself to a swan swimming on a lake, with a lion watching from one bank and a bear from the other. But the hardy Afghans, with a fierce love of independence, permitted neither foreign rule nor foreign interests to penetrate their country, and Afghanistan remained internally free. The British Raj is gone, and beyond the Khyber lies the friendly state of Pakistan. To the north, on the other hand, along a thousand-mile border in old Turkestan, are Soviet Turkomen, Uzbek and Tajik—republics of a new and powerful Russia. But Afghanistan's long years as a buffer state between Russia and British India have taught her diplomacy in the hard school of reality. An isolated and rugged country is building a modern nation to maintain her position in Central Asia.

Mr. Jewett was a pioneer in the electric work on the Pacific Coast. He installed the first electric street railway in San Francisco, the first polyphase electric transmission in California, the original Redlands power plant in Mill Creek Canyon, and the original installation of the San Joaquin Electric Company, besides a number of other street railways and power plants. As a foreign installing engineer for the General Electric Company, he was sent to southern India, where he installed a power plant for the Kolar Gold Fields in Mysore. In Brazil he made a similar installation for the Sao Bento Gold Estates, Limited, Santa Barbara. And later in Kashmir, near Srinagar in northern India—1200 miles by rail and 200 by tonga from Bombay—he made the Jhelum Power Installation. In 1910, the same year that he returned to the United States from India, he was persuaded by a British firm to go to Afghanistan. His decision was made with the idea that the assignment would take perhaps a year or two—"one cannot estimate time in the East."

His Afghan venture was his last. In fact, it seemed at times as if the plant would never be completed. Electric apparatus had to be hauled by elephant carts through the Khyber, orders from the Amir were delayed for months, labor was unskilled and unwilling. The installation was made after eight long and difficult years, and he was permitted to leave the country.

Then he returned to California, wanting only leisure and rest after living so long in foreign lands. Every summer in the four years that followed he vacationed in the Society Islands, and after spending a few months in Tahiti he set out to rove through the islands of the South Seas. He made a trip around the Fiji Islands on the governor's yacht, and to the island of Kadava with the Secretary for Native Affairs. In the Marquesas he met Professor Rollo H. Beck of the Whitney Expedition for the Museum of Natural Sciences, who took him to the Paumotos and back to Papeete as a

guest on his schooner "France." He visited Rurutu, Rimatara and Tubuai in the Austral group. In the end he found what he wanted—a home in Papeete, "in the last house on the street that fronts the ocean." A year later a tropical storm swept through the islands, and when it had passed he spent several hours clearing driftwood from his land. He died suddenly from a sunstroke on February 3, 1926, at the age of fifty-five.

Somewhere on his lovely island in the South Seas are teakwood tables, Indian embroideries, Peshawar wax work draperies, Afghan knives and guns, a remembrance cloth from Kabul—symbols of other days when a foreign installing engineer dreamed of "a vine and fig tree of his own to sit under and smoke a pipe"—days which live again with humor, pathos, and adventure in his vivid tales of Afghanistan.

MARJORIE JEWETT BELL

Austin, Minnesota
June 1948

Contents

ON THE ROAD TO KABUL 1
KABUL 15
JABAL-US-SIRAJ, MOUNTAIN OF LIGHT 22
THE OLD MAN WITH THE WHITE BEARD 30
WINTER QUARTERS 36
A TELEPHONE MESSAGE 41
A GUEST IS A FRIEND FOR THREE DAYS 46
FROM THE TOWER ROOM OF THE OLD FORT . 50
SPECIAL RUNNERS CARRY THE AMIR'S DAK . . 67
THE RURAL KOHISTANIS 70
IDLING AT BABER SARAI 76
ABDUR RAHMAN, THE DURANI CHIEF 82
IN THE SERVICE OF HIS MAJESTY 86
THE BETTER MOON 116
THE WAY OF A KING AT THE KABUL COURT . . 119
A FIRMAN FOR LEAVE 130
JALALABAD 159
THE TURKISH HAJJI 177
ON LEAVE IN INDIA 191
THE ELEPHANT CARTS ARE COMING 196

THE SPARROW AND THE WISDOM OF SA'DI . . 206
THIEVES AND BUDMASHES 214
THE LIGHT OF THE NATION AND THE FAITH . 218
WAITING FOR LEAVE 224
THE PUNJAB BANKING COMPANY, LIMITED . . 234
KOHISTAN BOUND 241
THE PAST IS PAST 247
THE BROWN MAN'S BURDEN 252
FROM THE KOTI SETAREH ENCLOSURE 256
LETTERS TO DAVID FAIRCHILD 264
FED BY THE SNOWS OF THE HINDU KUSH . . . 270
THIS YEAR WAS AS MUCH AS FIFTY 277
FOOL MOHAMMAD BLOWS THE BELLOWS . . . 281
KAFIR IDOLS 288
UNCAUGHT SPARROWS ARE CHEAP 294
WE GET UP WITH THE LARK 297
KABUL OF RECENT TIMES 303
A LAMP IS LIT 309
THE CODE OF THE KINGDOM 315
KISMET 320
TAMAM SHUD 326
GLOSSARY 329

List of Illustrations

The author as an Afghan 51
The old fort at Jabal-us-Siraj in midwinter 52
His Majesty, on his white horse, with a cavalcade of courtiers 53
The old fort lies at the foot of the Hindu Kush 53
The dak wallas, who carried the Amir's mail 54
Looking across the Deh Afghan toward the Ark enclosure 55
His Majesty's carriage and mounted escort at the entrance of the Id Masjid in Kabul 55
A typical Afghan village 56
The Lattaband Pass, looking toward Kabul 57
A. C. Jewett 58
The sarai at Dakka 91
A rice husking mill (picture by F. O. Crawford) 92
A sugar cane crusher 92
Preparing to go to India on leave 93
Camp on the way to Kabul 93
The entrance to the covered bazaar, the shopping district of Kabul 94
A street of shops 95
A shop in the bazaar at Jabal-us-Siraj 95
The sarai at Dakka, meeting place for kafilas 96
Kohistanis preparing a festival feast 97

Unloading mulberry wood inside the old fort at Jabal-us-Siraj 98
A native barber 98
The powerhouse at Jabal-us-Siraj 99
Elephants hauling machinery through the Khyber Pass 99
The surveying crew 100
Sappers and miners at roll call 100
Kohistanis working above the dam 101
Electrical apparatus was brought from Peshawar . . . 101
Pari, the work elephant 102
The average output was one rivet per minute for eight hours a day 103
Camels carrying transmission wire and iron for the steel towers 103
Native bridge builders making repairs 104
Celebrating the completion of the canal headworks . . 105
A section of the power canal 105
A crew of six erected two towers a day at a labor cost of forty-eight cents per tower 106
Prisoners waiting to be tried in durbar-i-bandi by the Amir 139
Most of the camel traffic passes through Afghanistan in the fall and winter 140
Gangs of workmen shoveling snow from the government buildings 140
The old palace at Jalalabad (picture by F. O. Crawford) 141
The Sheer Darwaza, or Lion's Gate 141
The tomb of Abdur Rahman 142
The tomb of Baber Shah 143

The Id Masjid in Kabul 144
Natives at prayer outside the Id Masjid in Kabul 145
At the mustofi's home in Kabul 146
Band practice at Jabal-us-Siraj 146
His Majesty, Habibullah Khan 147
Mahmud Jan 147
Jahangir Khan, an Afghan gentleman, and his servant . 147
Old Mohammad Bx, the khansaman, smoking chillum . 147
Khalil ullah Jan, "Sweet Friend of God" 148
One of the author's bodyguards 149
A guardhouse, with its marble milestone 150
Afghan irregulars, recruited from the Kohistan district . 151
Snow leopards guarding the entrance to the old fort at Jabal-us-Siraj 152
Idols brought from Kafiristan by the Amir, Abdur Rahman 152
The howdahs used in the ceremonial procession were made of solid silver 153
The Baber Sarai, Baber garden, and the Chardeh Valley 154

On the Road to Kabul

31 May 1911

THE Khyber Pass is open only on Tuesday and Friday. I left Peshawar on Friday, May 26. My kit, a train of sixteen yabus (pack horses or ponies), left the day before, loaded with my personal effects and a year's supplies—everything from a toothbrush to a bath tub, and from lemon extract and yeast cakes to a sack of Delhi flour, forty gallons of kerosene, bed, bedding, camp chairs, and tables. I also had a riding pony, a mehmandar, or guest entertainer, and every necessary servant, all kindly supplied by His Majesty, Habibullah Khan, for my safe transport to Kabul.

No Europeans have been allowed in Afghanistan since 1878, except those in the employ of the Amir or traders coming in at his request. For any European entering the country, a firman, from and signed by the Amir, is required, saying that the bearer shall be allowed to proceed through the country unmolested, and stating that a bodyguard, pack animals, and tents will be supplied for the road. On presenting this firman to the Secretary of State for India, the bearer will be granted a permit allowing him to pass the frontier.

When the pass is issued, the recipient is asked to sign a paper stating that he understands the British Indian Government takes no responsibility whatsoever for either him or his business. If he is a British subject it makes no difference. Of course the Afghans know of this, and the helplessness of Europeans is occasionally thrown up to them in the country. (All whites, including Americans, are usually referred to as Europeans out in the East.)

When one goes to Afghanistan he is generally spoken of

as having "gone off the map." The jumping-off place is Peshawar, the capital of the N.W.F.P. (North West Frontier Province). This last substantial British outpost on the road to Afghanistan lies on a plain, almost entirely encircled by hills. The foreign settlement, like all other Indian cantonments, is composed of the usual bungalows, official buildings, barracks, club, post office, and the one hotel. But the native city—narrow crooked streets huddled within mud walls—is less monotonous. Here to the bazaar come the caravan traders with their rugs, Swat blankets, furs, embroideries, old Afghan knives, and guns. Here also one finds the distinctive Peshawar "wax work," a design made on textile with a waxlike clay. Peshawar is fifteen hundred miles by rail from Bombay, and twelve miles from the eastern entrance to the Khyber Pass which leads to Kabul, Bokhara, and Turkestan. The railway ends at Jamrud, about ten miles beyond Peshawar, but this section is used only for military purposes. There is another fort, Landi Kotal, at the far end of the pass near the Afghan border.

All arrangements for transportation and supplies were made through the Afghan agent and postmaster in Peshawar, the Esteemed Ghulam Haider Khan. The first day we went by tonga to the Afghan sarai* at Landi Kotal. At Jamrud, the entrance of the Khyber, we were halted by the guard and had to show our passes from the British political agent. A little later our papers were examined again at Ali Masjid, where the incoming and outgoing kafilas meet. The whole thirty miles of the Khyber are under the guns of the forts and blockhouses built at strategic points. In the early morning the guards are sent out to stations all through the pass, and when the kafila starts, several riflemen walk in front and more bring up the rear for further protection. If the head of the column gets too far in advance, the guard

*For Persian and Hindustani words see Glossary, page 329. (Editor's note.)

halts it until the rear catches up with the rest. The pace is regulated by the slow-footed camel with his two-and-a-half-mile-an-hour gait. There must be no straggling; raids have been made on the kafila in broad daylight.

The guard is composed entirely of native troops commanded by British officers. But only natives convoy the kafilas. These Khyber Rifles are recruited largely from the neighboring tribes, the very tribes against whom they guard the pass. With few exceptions they have been true to their trust. Their officers are real men. They have to be, for these unlettered border ruffians are quick to recognize a weakling or one who is not a real sahib.

We got mixed up with the main kafila going through the Khyber Pass, and it was an interesting picture. Afghan gypsies with their women unveiled and dressed in patchwork clothes, generally very ragged, made up a part of the strange procession. There were tribesmen, camels, yabus, cows, donkeys, goats, and all sorts—men and animals.

After a camel is loaded, cooking pots and pans are festooned about him, and chickens (there are always chickens) are tied on by the legs at various points of vantage. Sometimes as many as eight lambs too young to walk will be tied on the back of a camel, where they lie quiet and contented all tangled together. Often a cow carrying a pack of supplies is followed by a man who trudges along with her offspring, too young to walk, thrown across his shoulders. The pack of a yabu or camel may be topped by a youngster—unconcerned on his precarious throne—all but naked and asleep in the boiling sun, his head shaved except for a little wisp that impishly sticks up from the crown of his head. I have seen children fall off a number of times, but they seldom yapped, and when they did there was cause. A young donkey or colt has his legs bound to support weak tendons, or may be strapped on his mother's pack. There are cocks and hens everywhere. It is odd to see a big rooster on the

top of a camel's load, balancing himself for a crow with his legs braced against the lurching of the camel.

I have seen dead men, bound to a charpai, or string bedstead, and loaded crosswise on a donkey's back, being taken back to the home village for burial. Death comes, but the kafila must go on.

A refractory cow with a sudden determination to return to India may bring a temporary disturbance or delay. Once a young camel heaved and bucked until its pack shifted and swung under its belly—then it went mad and started on a wild gallop back through the pass, bumping into other camels and creating an uproar. The names applied to the camel's ancestors before its mad career was halted were something scandalous.

This is just local freight. The through trains, the long strings of big Bokhara camels with their tawny beards and hairy legs, are loaded with packs that go to Kabul and on beyond to Bokhara and Russian Turkestan. Hundreds of them carry tea and cotton goods from India, or matches "made in Sweden"—perhaps twenty camels with matches alone. There will be others loaded with kerosene marked "Standard Oil Co., made in U.S.A.," or bales and boxes marked "made in Germany and Austria." Of late one sees many "made in Japan."

We caught up with our kafila at the Landi Kotal sarai, where there were two rooms in one corner reserved for Europeans and Afghan gentlemen. The sarai was a large walled enclosure, its thick mud walls ten or twelve feet high, loopholed, with towers at the corners like a fort. A guard from the Khyber Rifles was stationed inside, and there was no leaving without permission. The court was packed with camels, yabus, and donkeys which produced all the sounds of Babel.

A few hundred yards from the sarai was the fort at Landi Kotal, the last British outpost. While we were having tea,

the Officer in Charge sent for us to see our firmans from the Amir. He invited us to dine that evening at the British fort, so we went back to the sarai, dug out much-wrinkled dinner coats, and prepared for our last meal on British territory. About dusk, a Pathan havildar came and saluted, presenting us with a guard of two riflemen. They escorted us up the hill to the fort, where, after a challenge, the iron door was opened. The challenge, "Who goes there?" and the answer, "Fren," sound odd coming from these Pushtu-speaking Pathans; they are about the only English words they can speak. Our guard withdrew and a Pathan orderly escorted us into the fort. We dined in the officers' mess, spent a very pleasant evening, rather wet, and were returned under guard about eleven o'clock, being challenged by sentries at every turn. The O.C. told me I was the third American to enter Afghanistan, the last one in 1840.

Next morning we were up at five. Our hired yabus were owned by and in the charge of some Shinwaris, but as they were not all the property of one man, there were heated arguments over who was to take the heaviest loads. The guards finally sorted things with the flats of their swords, and we proceeded on our way under escort from the fort. The native sergeant remarked that our hired carriers, the Shinwaris, were a lot of shaitans, which is right—they are.

Mallett, a European also bound for Kabul, had sent up two bulldogs the day before. They got in exhausted and footsore, so he tied them in my bath tub and balanced it on top of a mule between the packs. 'Twas some time before the dogs became reconciled; the mule didn't like it either. Furthermore, it took promises of large baksheesh to bring the owner of the mule to look upon the arrangements with favor. At certain intervals all through the trip the tub and the dogs would fall off, giving cause for much taklif and a variety of language.

My old Hindustani cook, the khansaman, used to fall off

too. There was complaint that he could not stick on anything, and finally the Shinwaris roped him on between the packs of a donkey. The old man wears a long blue army coat and looks like a picture. He speaks Pushtu, Hindi, and Parsee or Persian, which is the language of the country. Riding near him in the procession is my boy, or bearer, with a water bottle and a pair of field glasses of mine slung around his shoulders.

At the border five miles beyond the pass we were met by His Majesty's guards, and the others turned back. Along the road to Dakka, the first Afghan outpost, there were Afghan khassadars, the native guards, to maintain order, and a few crude blockhouses in imitation of the British. A lone rock stood out prominently on one side as we crossed the line into Afghan territory. Someone has suggested that on it should be engraved in large letters, "All hope abandon, ye who enter here." The road follows the dry bed of a river and the pass widens out. A sort of go-as-you-please air came over the procession; they were in Afghanistan now.

Along the way, we met large groups of Hindu traders and shopkeepers, some returning, others making their first trip to Kabul. It is the order that all Hindus in Afghanistan must wear a yellow lungi, and their womenfolk a yellow dress as well, to distinguish them from the true believers. If a Hindu wears his white turban when he crosses the line, the first Afghan he meets will roughly jerk it off, calling him a but-parast, or idol worshiper. Those who have been initiated by previous experiences are very careful to wind the yellow turban around their heads before entering the kingdom.

Just before reaching Dakka, we encountered the Afghan customs barrier. There was no building; the customs collector, a benevolent-looking old gentleman sheltered by an umbrella, was seated on a big flat-topped rock beside the road. Surrounded by soldiers with rifles and fixed bayonets, he took toll of everyone who passed, piling the money near

him on a blanket. There was a lot of argument and some objection, but a rifle butt in the chest halted anyone who attempted to crowd past. One way of conducting them to the rock was to knock off head coverings and drag them up by the hair—they were assisted to find their money in their kamarbands or turbans where it is usually tied. After the payment was made the foot passengers were stamped on the palm of the hand with some characters in red ink, and allowed to pass. All foreigners had to pay a head tax, and there was a tax, besides, on animals and on the goods they carried. We were, of course, exempt, having the Amir's firman. The old man invited us up on the rock beside him, and greeted us with "Good morning." This was the extent of his English. We watched the performance until all our animals had passed. 'Twas interesting; the old gentleman's most active assistant looked like Captain Kidd. The customs are farmed out, the collector contracting to turn in a fixed amount to the government. He will always reserve a large percentage of the money for his own use, in any case.

The Shinwaris continued their arguments with large stones at intervals along the road, and later I had occasion to dress some broken heads. We made Dakka, the first Afghan outpost, the second day, and thereafter traveled nights and early mornings to avoid the heat. Most of the way we stopped outside the sarais and camped under trees.

The serang, as the Amir's representative at Dakka is called, has none too savory a reputation, even among the Afghans; rumor has it that he has instigated and been at the bottom of more than one border raid. Dakka is a meager collection of unsightly mud houses on a stony plain, with a sarai for the kafilas. Around the inside of the sarai under the walls are rooms and booths in which tea and food are sold to travelers, who sleep with their goods and chattels among the camels in the open court. When the caravan halts, the camel-tenders stack the loads, feed the animals, and then

build small fires in little holes in the ground near the camels to cook their own food—for each, a simple process where only one pot is used. Three second-story rooms in the sarai are reserved for Europeans and Afghan gentlemen.

We camped under some trees by a large spring, which served the double purpose of furnishing drinking water and carrying off the drainage from the sarai. There was not much there but a little grateful shade, the usual mud-walled village close by, and a small garden where some falcons which the Afghans use for hunting were tied to perches. One of them was very peevish and kept up an infernal screeching. Below us a man was shooting birds with baked mud pellets from a blowgun of bamboo about eight feet long and bound in rawhide.

The Kabul River nearby was in flood and about twice as wide as I ever saw the Mississippi. Natives were crossing on mussaks of goat or cattle skins blown full of air. Sometimes two or three would ride together using their legs to propel and steer, and when they went in the swift current it was quite a sight to see them bobbing about with bunches of legs kicking in all directions. The heat was intense, so I proposed that we go swimming. There were some objections because there were women about, but finally the mehmandar, who was sent down by His Majesty, agreed to take us about a quarter of a mile down the river. He wears a fur cap, a sort of badge of office, speaks a little Hindustani, Persian, of course, and a few words of English.

The mehmandar has been supplied since Mr. Flascher, a German in the Amir's employ who taught gun making, was shot and killed by his own guard when going out on leave some years ago. He has charge of the party and all the arrangements and is, as the Amir puts it, "to be between the Europeans and the people." My ressala consists of a duffadar and six guards.

We had the boys bring along dressing gowns, camp chairs,

and a grass mat. The mehmandar and three of the guards with their rifles and tulwars went along to keep the crowd at a respectful distance. The snow is melting on the Safed Koh (White Mountains) and the river is very turbulent and muddy, but we found a fine bit of back water. Now the "farangis" go for a swim every evening.

Dakka is within a half mile of the right bank of the Kabul River, and except for a narrow strip along the river the surrounding country is comparatively barren. By road it is two long marches from Dakka to Jalalabad. The sarais along the road usually average a day's march apart, about seven or eight krohs (a kroh is 1.83 miles), and the route via Basawal and Girdi-kaj follows the river most of the way. In hot weather one travels at night if there is a moon; otherwise it is customary to start about three in the morning, and the day's march is finished by ten or eleven o'clock.

This is the thirty-first and we left on the twenty-sixth. Ever since Landi Kotal we have camped under trees with a bit of carpet, portable tables, chairs, and folding cots with mosquito canopies. There is no moon and it's too dark to travel nights. We get up about three-thirty, are away by four-thirty, and get in a couple of hours of fairly cool traveling. Our yabus go faster than camels; still, it is pretty slow and we keep with the caravan.

There has been a row on between some of the Shinwaris ever since we started, arguments every morning over loading. The ressala lays in with the flats of their swords and whips. In two or three rows on the road, one chap got laid out with a rock and has been going for a couple of days with his head tied up in bandages. Came to me tonight to have it dressed and a few minutes later another turned up with a bad finger.

Day before yesterday one of the guards, quite an old man, was feeling pretty bad with fever and coated tongue. Gave him phenacetin; nothing else handy, and put him on a milk

diet—he's still with us. Last night there was a sick man at the place where we stopped. After due consultation we gave him a couple of blue pills; a good physic is always a pretty good thing. Don't know what ailed him, but found out that he eats too much opium. I have used up most of a bottle of antiseptic and bandages are running short. Will have to economize.

After Dakka came Basawal, where I went swimming alone. The river was very swift and sections of the bank kept falling in with a heavy rushing noise. Then after another day's march—hot and tiring—we stopped at Girdi-kaj just outside the sarai. I anchored a melon in the river along with some soda water bottles and had iced melon, cold soda, and green cucumbers, which are quite a delicacy—you eat them along the road as you eat an apple. Our nan is made of stone-ground whole wheat and is sweet and wholesome like graham bread. A hunk of nan, a cucumber, and a cup of tea make a good lunch. Of course, we have chicken and eggs, but they get tiresome.

Tuesday we arrived at Jalalabad, where we saw His Majesty's palaces and some of the royal elephants. About two miles beyond we stopped at a place owned by Jahangir Khan. He gave us a cordial welcome and we camped in his garden all afternoon, talking and smoking under a fine old chinar. All about us were mulberry trees from which ripe white fruit kept dropping. A big oleander about twenty-five feet high was covered with bloom. Jahangir Khan, who had been reading *Arabian Nights* in the original Arabic, was smoking a chillum. A servant would blow the stale smoke back through the stem before passing it to another—his sole duty was to care for the chillum.

The gentlemen present remarked about my having a gold tooth. They all had white, even, sound teeth which I envied. I got into conversation with a fine-looking young man of thirty, a Peshawari who had been in Kashmir and spoke

Hindustani. He plied me with questions about India and expressed a strong desire to go back. When I asked him why he did not return, he told me he had hit a Hindu on the head with a pole and unfortunately the man died. If he crossed the line the British sarkar would get him. 'Twas a pity, for he seemed a fine man and the Hindu was probably a shaitan, as he said.

Jahangir Khan, who by the way seemed more like a character from the pages of the book he had been reading, asked permission to send us our dinner. When we gladly accepted, he sent out a large dish of pilau and a bowl of curds—the best meal since we started. Early the next morning when we left at dawn, our host was up and presented each of us with a rose. These people are fond of flowers and songbirds and are very hospitable.

Along the road from Jalalabad to Kabul, a distance of about sixty-one krohs, the usual stopping places are Bauli, Nimlah, Surkhpul (Red Bridge), Jagdalak, Barikab (Fine Water), Khakijabar (Dust of Jabar), and Butkhak. But there are intermediate stopping places, which make it possible to complete a march and a half.

Arriving at Fatehabad, between Bauli and Nimlah, we camped under some fig trees until about nine in the evening. Just at bedtime the mehmandar and the duffadar of the guard came to tell us that it was unhealthy to sleep under trees in that vicinity, and that they would move the tents out into the open for us. We protested at first, but they were firmly insistent that fig trees were very bad, said that all of the kit and the cook tent had been moved already, so after some further talk, we grudgingly consented and moved out into the center of an open field, where the guard built a fire. Noticing that they seemed to be on the qui vive that night, I came to the conclusion that perhaps it might be unhealthy to sleep under fig trees after all.

Fatehabad has an unsavory reputation, so when a Euro-

pean stops for the night his mehmandar generally arranges with the head man of the village for additional men to mount guard, making a record of their names. As these are the thieves themselves, one is quite safe. We left the river at Jalalabad and missed our baths there.

Kabul, 6 June 1911

The following morning when we arrived at His Majesty's gardens at Nimlah, we telephoned Kabul and received the Amir's message to hurry along the way. Our longer trek and stopping made us later getting in — only came eighteen miles to Gandamak, but it is slow traveling and damned hot. We are under some big mulberries on the bank of a mountain stream, and not far away under the trees is the owner of the place, camping there in preference to living in his mud-walled home. While we were resting my camera and binoculars were the source of quite a little entertainment. The crowd gathered around to examine them and one wag, after gazing through the glasses long and carefully, announced that he could see London. In the evening a gale came up and turned over cots, tables, and chairs. It rained a little and looked like more, so we pitched the tent and the Shinwaris covered up our kit as well as possible. Were packed again at four and have been in the saddle nine hours on some tea and a few bites of nan.

There are ruby mines at Jagdalak with soldiers guarding them. The Hindustani mullah who is stopping here told us about the mines, and how men got away with the rubies by snapping them into their mouths with their fingers. We found nothing but a bungalow, and couldn't buy chicken, eggs, milk, or anything. It would take a hundred square miles of this land to feed a jack rabbit. I got off the trail on a short trek and did see a hare; only animal I've seen except some ugly-looking lizards. The chief crop is cobblestones, acres of them, miles of them — I think cobblestones must be named from Kabul stone.

There are snow-capped mountains on both sides and in front. The trail follows up the valleys and our stopping places are little oases where there are trees and water. Along the road there is very little vegetation to be seen except patches of camel grass and thin bunches of grass, though today I noticed a lot of small poppies.

I got another patient with a broken head yesterday and have four now: two broken heads, one jammed finger, and a couple of bad feet. Invented a new salve by mixing iodoform with vaseline. The Shinwaris want me to doctor their horses now; this is insulting!

It was early when we arrived at Barikab (Fine Water) after another short trek today. We had just settled and covered our kit when it started to rain. Suddenly we heard a roaring noise, and on looking out saw a flood of water and boulders coming down the nullah evidently from a cloudburst higher up in the hills. There was a scrambling among the Shins and our kit narrowly escaped being carried away. Luckily it was on a bit of higher ground and the water split and went both sides of it. Still, it would have been flooded if we had not broken down a barrier to divert the rapidly rising water. My boy waded in and did heroic work. It was a wonder that someone did not have his foot mashed between the grinding stones that were rolling down in the turbulent stream.

After passing over some rugged country we made Butkhak. Between the Lattaband Pass and Kabul in a narrow and winding gorge we saw an iron cage suspended above the road on a pole. Two highway robbers were held there on the site where the robbery was committed and a guard placed over them until they starved to death. Bones and bits of clothing still remained in the cage to show the fate of those who were executed in this manner by royal decree. Further on we passed a second cage where a robber was confined and starved to death during the reign of the former Amir, Abdur Rahman.

Strong measures are the only ones which serve here. You meet a man armed with rifle, pistol, tulwar, and maybe another knife or two. His greeting is "Peace be with you," and you reply, "And with you peace." I have found them good-natured and hospitable, though I shouldn't care to start an argument.

We arrived in Kabul on the eleventh day, about three days less than if we had had camels. Sometimes it has been so hot that I had to use my tobacco pouch to keep my hand from sticking to the paper. Have no apologies to make for anything.

Kabul

KABUL, the capital of Afghanistan, lies on a fertile plain enclosed on three sides by bare, rugged mountains. It has occupied a position of strategic importance from earliest times, dominating the valley and many of the great caravan routes which pass through Central Asia.

From the heights on the southeast, Bala Hissar (Upper Fort) still overlooks the city, but only crumbling walls remain to show its former strength. According to a treaty the British made with Afghanistan, the fort was to be dismantled and left unoccupied. It is so today.

Broken walls and bastions mark as well the region where the British were entrenched on two long, low hills, known as Bemaru ridge, in 1839-40. Commanding these heights now, a lone, dark spot against the sky, is the Bloody Gun, so called because criminals are executed there. It is the morning, noon, and evening gun, and is used to fire salutes during the month of Ramazan to indicate when fasting must begin just before dawn, and again in the evening when fasting may be broken.

Kabul, the city proper, is a huddle of mud and mud-brick houses on the right side of the Kabul River. Its streets are narrow and crooked, dirty and uninviting. The population changes somewhat with the seasons which govern the caravan trade and may be sixty or seventy thousand. There is no census taken in Afghanistan.

The streets in the bazaar or shopping district are covered over and resemble long tunnels. The sides are lined with small booths where the merchants sell cloth, mostly cotton and cheap prints, bandana handkerchiefs, and tinseled rubbish. Their other wares are largely of the "made in Ger-

many" variety, cheap things cheaply made. Little silk is to be purchased, for in spite of the multitude of mulberry trees there is no silk manufactured in the Kabul district, or elsewhere, unless a little Kandahar way. In numerous stalls along these narrow passageways may be found the produce of the country — grains, flour, vegetables, fruits. Some merchants sell sweetmeats and sharbat; others curds and cooked food, bread and cakes. Butchers, shoemakers, and metal-workers plying their trades add to the confused sounds of the bazaar.

Friends and even strangers have written me for rugs and furs. No rugs are made in the Kabul district, and few in the country worth mentioning. The carpets and rugs from Bokhara, Persia, Kandahar, and Herat go right through to India, where there is a market for them. Furs there are none, except those that come from Russia, and these like the carpets go on to the markets in India.

There is little manufactured in Afghanistan that a European would find worth taking out of the country, bar a sheepskin coat called a pustin, an old flintlock jezail with a curved inlaid stock, or an Afghan knife or two. The rosaries for which Afghanistan is supposed to be noted do not amount to much. The prayer beads — about the size of a navy bean — are usually made from Kandahar stone, which is almost amber-colored and semitranslucent, and the best command a price. The natives who make them sit around the bazaar evenings matching beads with each other for size and shape.

There are no sewers in Kabul. The night soil is collected by donkey boys, mixed with a little earth, and sold as fertilizer. Each vender of this kud, as it is called, is allotted a certain district. Coming into the city in the early morning, one meets strings of donkeys going out into the country loaded with kud. Other strings pass them on their way in, bearing wood, grain, hay, vegetables, and fruit for the city's needs. Lines of men carry yokes across their shoulders, from which

are suspended pots of milk, soft cheese, and curds in cone-shaped white cloth sacks, with the whey dripping from the pointed end. The milk is carried in porous earthen jars that are not washed too often, and then only with cold water. One will meet these milk carriers later, returning barefoot with their shoes stuck in the empty pots. An Afghan does not know the meaning of the words *cleanliness* and *sanitation,* nor would he let them bother him if he did.

When I first arrived in Kabul, I was taken to the Baber Sarai at the foot of Baber gardens, about two miles west of Kabul and just outside the Sheer Darwaza or Lion's Gate. I was given quarters in an old palace built around a court, formerly a haram sarai where the queens of the Amir were kept. The furnishings of my room consisted of rugs on the floor and two chairs; there were windows facing the court and recesses in all the walls. Here I waited until June 18 for an audience with the Amir. On the seventeenth, the Sardar Azimoolah Khan, court interpreter, came to express his regrets that His Majesty was suffering from gout and had been ordered not to dress by his doctor. It would be undignified for a monarch to receive a stranger informally.

Next day word came that His Majesty would receive me at the Koti Setareh Palace (Star of Houses) at ten in the morning. At the appointed time I put on my frock coat, which my servant always referred to as my "ceremony coat," and set out in the "mail phaeton carriage" His Majesty had sent for me. There were the driver and two men up behind, and four outriders — quite a procession.

The palaces and the Ark enclosure containing the government buildings — what might be called the fashionable quarter — are on the left bank of the river. This part of the city is not so congested; there are wide well-watered streets and shade trees. The palace grounds are carefully tended and spacious and the houses are of much better construction. But a settlement of mud houses, an Afghan village or Deh

Afghan, has grown up along the outer limits on the hillside and has become a part of the city.

At the palace the court interpreter took me to a tent on the lawn, where refreshments were served before I was ushered into the presence. When I removed my hat and hung it outside the audience hall the interpreter looked me over, pulled my tie straight, and patted down a refractory lock of hair. Then the door was opened. Except for the two chief sardars, the fat and the lean one, His Majesty was alone, resting at one side of the large room. He was deeply absorbed, writing in a notebook which he held in his hand, and did not look up for a moment. The pose was obviously staged.

After a proper royal interlude His Majesty glanced up and motioned us to come forward. Then he rose, shook hands, and welcomed me to Afghanistan. "May you be in good health, Mr. Jewett. May you not be tired! Have you had time to recover from your long trip to Kabul?"

"Baber Bagh has been very restful, Your Majesty," I replied. I had been idling there for three weeks waiting for an interview, but Orientals never seem to note the passing of time.

"I have had an attack of gout," His Majesty explained. "My doctor has ordered me to rest, but God willing, it will be only a few days longer."

He preceded us, walking stiffly with the aid of a cane, and seated himself before us—short and stout in his well-cut clothes. "You will be seated," he said, indicating a chair near his own.

Here before me was the last independent ruler in the Mohammedan world, and the most capable and intelligent man of his kingdom. His Majesty's broad face was framed with a closely cropped beard. His shrewd, dark eyes, which regarded me from unrimmed spectacles, gave him an appearance of force and dignity.

"We will talk about your work later," His Majesty said. "You have come from beyond Jalalabad and have noticed the river there. Because of heavy snow this winter the rivers are higher than they have been in three years. Now I want you to tell me what you saw on the way."

I mentioned the flooded river at Dakka and the cloudburst at Barikab. But one thing is certain, the Amir was more than pleased when I spoke about his road. "It is true, I have built a good road from Kabul to the Khyber, 180 miles long," he said proudly. "Two cholera epidemics delayed the work, but I finished it the second year in spite of all hindrances. You have seen what an advantage it will be for my country."

His heavy voice carefully found each word, sometimes with difficulty, and resounded about the room as if he were in public durbar. "My elephant carts," he continued, "are hauling some goods that have already been two years on the road. If I sent camels to Peshawar for the electric parts at this time of year, ninety out of a hundred would die on the road. But arrangements will be made for your work. When one hundred works are in progress, it is better to get two or three or maybe ten finished and let the others wait."

Then the Amir began to tell me his plans for a hydro-electric scheme. "We will build the plant in Kohistan in the mountains at Jabal-us-Siraj. When it is finished, it will furnish power for the workshops and light for the palaces."

For an hour His Majesty discussed with me the details of the location and construction of the powerhouse and canal. He understands the work and has a large fund of knowledge.

"I have only a few minutes," he said finally, "but am taking more in order that we may become better acquainted. When people meet for the first time there is a screen between them which prevents free intercourse. You are to spend a week looking about Kabul with a competent guide. Then the mustofi will take you to Jabal-us-Siraj to examine the powerhouse site. I hope to go too if I am not ill."

His Majesty bade me goodbye. Assuring me that we should meet again and become better acquainted, he said, "The mustofi will arrange for a horse and interpreter—you must first become familiar with the country." I found him very courteous and very much of a king.

I remained at Baber for the Jashn, which follows the solar year and comes on our Fourth of July. The Jashn, the Amir explained, was the "Festival of Nations"; on this day all governors and officials come to Kabul and do homage to him. His Majesty very kindly sent me an invitation, also a carriage and pair, with two up in front, two behind, and four mounted guards as outriders. The invitation, printed in Persian with gold lettering, specified "complete eating dress," which I wore.

The Koti Setareh Palace and grounds and trees were all decked with colored lights. There were thousands of people there and it was a very handsome tamasha with feasting and music. We Europeans had a separate table under a canopy on the lawn. Pilau and meat were served, and then soup and several other courses. The Amir very kindly sent over a special dish with a silver cover from his own table and a large bowl of ice cream with four spoons.

We played bridge for a while till it was time to pay our respects to His Majesty. He received us with a ready welcome and showed us an exhibition of photographs and views on display near him.

"I have taken many of them myself," he said with pride. "The pictures are on sale. The proceeds go to the support of our hospital."

"They are excellent," I said after making a careful selection, and promptly seized the opportunity to add, "May I have permission to take a flashlight of Your Majesty?"

The Amir did not understand what I meant, but he listened attentively while I explained how it was done.

"You may show me," His Majesty consented. He was seat-

ed under a large canopy with all his sardars and officials about him. Shamianahs, with high circular tops and open sides, were erected on the lawn in the palace grounds, and the grass was covered with rich royal carpets. About twenty men with bagpipes paraded around the enclosure.

I prepared to take the picture, but there was delay and much changing about after everyone was seated. This went on for some minutes. And then: "What is the action made by the powder?" His Majesty inquired.

It suddenly occurred to me that the Amir was afraid of an explosion. "There is no danger," I hastened to explain.

"No, that is not it at all," protested His Majesty. However, there was no more lingering. He seated himself with his two eldest sons and some of the sardars and the picture was taken.

Governors and officials who had been received by the Amir were grouped around the palace grounds. We listened to a band very similar to any other, except that Afghans do not read notes. The music was fine, and I thought I recognized bits of tunes. Spent a very pleasant evening.

Jabal-us-Siraj, Mountain of Light

Jabal-us-Siraj, 4 October 1911

IN 1910, the Amir Habibullah Khan of Afghanistan bought the machinery and material for a hydroelectric plant from an English firm, through their Indian agent. My services to act as chief engineer in charge of the work for the Amir were obtained through the company that supplied the electrical machinery. At this time, I had but recently returned from Kashmir to the United States, having just completed the installation of a hydroelectric project for the Kashmir government.

The site of the powerhouse is at Jabal-us-Siraj, in Kohistan, fifty miles north of Kabul by road. The purpose of the plant is to furnish power to operate the machine shops, gun factory, mint, boot factory, and woolen mills located in Kabul, all of which are steam-operated at a cost of $150,000 a year for wood, which has become very scarce in Afghanistan. Incidentally, the palaces are to be lighted from this power as well. The plant was sold to the Amir, f.o.b. Bombay, and all transport and the construction of the plant were left to him. The scheme was for a forty-two-mile, 44,000-volt, three-phase transmission line, 1500 kw. installed. Not a large plant, but a big undertaking for Afghanistan.

I am living in one of the tower rooms of His Majesty's fort, which dominates a low ridge of land above the valley. A new fort is being built close by. There are commodious quarters down below, but I like it up here on account of the view and the greater privacy. My room is ten-sided with four large windows. The woodwork is painted bright blue, a popular Afghan color. There was not a stick of furniture or shelf or even a nail in the wall when I moved in, but I have put up

some shelves and have made the raise of a couple of old tables; am getting to look a bit more homelike.

I came up here in the middle of July, did some leveling, made a report to His Majesty, and returned to Kabul. Then I came back and started some work excavating a channel to divert the river at the dam site. The hydro-scheme will take some doing — all that is needed is water, a head, and a place to build the canal. The engineer (?) who located the site was a very good and conscientious man. He had read a treatise on the Roorkee canals in India and several other books. The hill has an angle of twenty-three degrees in the steepest part; the pipe was ordered with an angle of thirty degrees from the powerhouse. I have asked the company to change the pipe angle, and His Majesty to order some extra pipe to make the scheme operative. His Majesty is a good engineer and readily sees anything that is explained to him. I should have to write too much to go into details, but it will take a long time; the end I cannot see.

This is Ruza, the Mohammedan lent, which lasts through the thirty days of the month of Ramazan. All good Mohammedans fast from sunup till sundown and drink no water during that time. This is hard on the men who are working in the hot sun; their tonsils and tongues swell and become painful. They quit work earlier — three or four in the afternoon. A good part of the night is taken up with prayers and meals, so they do not get a full night's sleep. The weather is hot now too; 80 at 5 A.M., 90 at noon, and 86 at 8 P.M. Has been that way for about three weeks. It is very dry; the humidity must be nil, and the wind from ten to ten would blow the hair off your head.

Every morning I go up to the dam we are building — guard in front with a rusty sword to clear the way and one behind; then the mirza, the mehmandar, and other parasites in the order of precedence. My interpreter makes his horse go by flapping his legs. In the work on the dam the sappers and

miners use black powder, blasting without a fuse. They drill a hole and put in powder and a rod about one-fourth inch in diameter; then they tamp the hole, pull out the rod, and pour in more powder, leaving a little pile on top and placing small stones around to keep the powder from blowing away. Then they put in a bit of tinder rag which projects an inch —not more. The havildar is able to light three or four of these bits of rags and get away. He is very expert as you can see, for he has done this for some time.

Recently when the halvidar had a fever, I tried to take his temperature. He nearly bolted, thinking I was going to put a hole in his tongue. Then, after explanations, he stood for it, though he gasped and shook a bit. After the fever was down I gave him four grain capsules of quinine to swallow. He chewed them up and said they were "very bitter." He's back at work now. Bisyar khub chiz (very good thing), quinine.

Ever since I have been here the Mustofi-al-Mamalik, governor of this district, has supplied me with grapes, peaches, plums, cherries, apples, mulberries, and melons. The Mustofi Sahib just received a car about ten days ago. The motorcar dates from His Majesty's visit to India while I was in Kashmir. When he visited India in 1907, the British presented him with two handsome motorcars, which he took to Kabul with him by way of Kandahar. He has a number now, and they are beginning to make better roads.

His Majesty came up to spend the day last Sunday (Sunday comes on Friday). He camped down by the river under some trees, and sent for me in the afternoon. They were shooting at wooden eggs with air rifles. His Majesty is a fair shot and will spend several hours shooting with a small rifle. It was a game in which the courtiers took part, each shooting a certain number of times, the loser contributing a rupee to what appeared to be a kitty or jackpot. The others, including the Amir, would ridicule each man in turn, telling

him he would surely miss, in an endeavor to spoil his shot. Of course, no one spoke when the Amir was taking aim.

He gave me a cigarette from his own case and lighted it, then gave me a tin of tobacco. We sat and talked for quite a bit without an interpreter. By using simple language and avoiding technical terms, it is possible to converse with him in English; in fact, he is beginning to speak now so that I can understand him very well. When talking through an interpreter he will often interrupt and scold the interpreter for inaccuracy. If Europeans are present and he does not want them to understand what he says, he uses Afghani. The Amir is a good linguist and speaks several languages—Persian, Pushtu, Arabic, Hindustani or Urdu, Turki, and quite a little English.

Just got a chit from Halliday,* saying he has fever and boils with complications and wants me to come over to Five Rivers, where he is putting in a bridge. Going to ride over to have a look at him. He's my only neighbor closer than fifty miles. "Sufficient unto the day . . ."

Recently I have been getting sour bread, and last Sunday after a confabulation with the khansaman I decided to make some myself. Anyway, I set a sponge, but my bread was heavy and did not rise. Maybe the blighter put hot water on the yeast and killed it. I'm going to try again sometime. At least, the khansaman's bread has improved since I found that he was keeping a bit of sour dough over from the last batch. What they start with God knows! Miller† thinks they scrape the mould off a sausage and use it for yeast.

*Halliday was a representative of a Calcutta steel company, which supplied all of the Amir's steel for bridges, buildings, and industry. (Editor's note.)

†James Miller was a Scotchman employed by the Amir to build the Kabul woolen mills, a dam at Ghazni, and two or three golf courses. He won the respect and admiration of the Amir to such a degree that he was often called at midnight to converse when H.M. could not sleep. (Editor's note.)

I'm all alone here and what with the cares of housekeeping and a few other things, such as dams and powerhouses, am fairly occupied. I'd like to have your mental picture of my surroundings to compare with the reality. You remember I said that whatever else it would be, it would be interesting. It's both—the *Arabian Nights* isn't in it.

I think that is enough for one time; I'm off to the cot. Manda na bashi! (May you not be tired!)

Jabal-us-Siraj, 17 November 1911

His Majesty has motored up here several times. I have had the honor of taking tea with him, and several conversations. He came out here early in October, and although he was here for ten days, I only saw him for half an hour; unfortunately he took a cold and could do no business. I talked to him for a short time one day and we discussed Noah and the flood and counted the Prophets. His Majesty very kindly presented me with a gold wrist watch, one of his own, and put it on me himself. He returned to Kabul, and when he got better motored out to spend the day. After several hours with him about the work, we had tiffin under the trees. I showed him a few kodaks of a tamasha at the opening of a new bridge near here, and he pinched some of the negatives to enlarge. He is an excellent photographer.

In October His Majesty, with two of his sons, sardars, and royal ministers, officially opened a new iron bridge, the first in Kohistan, just completed at Panj Sheer about five miles west of Parwan. There was a drum corps of about a hundred drums at the celebration, and it might be said that it was stirring. Kohistanis are especially given to drums, which they beat on both ends simultaneously with a curved flat stick. The crowd which gathered wore sarkari caps. It is the Amir's order that all officials or men in government employ shall wear these caps in his presence. You should see the great scrambling to find or borrow them when H.M. makes an unexpected visit.

His Majesty unlocked the padlock that fastened the rope across the bridge. Then he sent his motor across, followed it on foot, and rode back. The reason was that although the bridge is guaranteed for a distributed load of twenty-five tons, the Afghans, including "The Light of the Nation" and "The Sum of All Knowledge," cannot figure stresses and strains; this was his way of being sure the bridge would hold up his car. The Afghan knowledge is all empirical.

Yesterday I was invited down to a sort of working bee where they are putting in a bridge, an engineering feat of the mustofi. In the river bed they had erected some cast-iron columns which were originally intended for the Koti-dil-Kusha Palace in Kabul. Tree trunks, roughly dressed, were laid across these and the whole covered with planking. Part of this bridge falls down or washes out every year, and already it has cost the state more than an iron bridge to span the river. The floods tipped some of the columns over. Now they are going to set them in cement and build piers around them. There were thirty-five hundred men at work on a canal to divert the river, some of them coming twelve miles to work and walking back at night. They work for the *love* of the chief malik of the district. There were soldiers on guard, and drums were beaten and fifes shrieked to encourage the men—very fine music.

The Afghan method of bridge construction is to lay poles across and then to cover the poles with flat stones and the whole with earth. The dead weight of the stones and earth generally reduces the factor of safety to a minimum.

The chief of the district has been very kind to me. He has given me too many presents—sheep, Russian boots, a pustin, and a sheepskin cap that I admired. He pinched this off the man who wore it. Very nice man, the mustofi! When I came home from the bridge after dark, he sent some maliks along as a guard of honor. I gave them a receipt for myself to take back to him.

I have been busy getting my work at the dam ready for

the winter and the spring floods. The conditions of working up here are unusual. For instance, cement delivered here is five dollars per cubic foot; there is no such thing as getting stone cut; the bricks we use are nearly as good as adobe bricks.

Have had my hands full working with absolutely raw material. My gilkars (literally, mud workers) have never seen cement and they use it like mud. I've cursed till I'm hoarse, but one man cannot see every stone and every bucketful go in. When an old gray-bearded gilkar tells you that he won't wet the brick because he's been a gilkar for forty years and knows more than you do, you have recourse to the stick; I've taught a few. Cement five dollars per cubic foot and gilkars sixteen cents per day, and one gilkar can waste a year's wages in cement while your back is turned ten minutes. Eight dollars pays a hundred coolies for a day, and the sappers and miners get a dollar and sixty cents per month; estimating on work here is a curious business.

Inshallah, we shall get some more cement up this year. *Inshallah,* meaning "if God wills," is an expression in frequent use, and is much more potential in the negative sense than the Spanish *manana.*

Now I'm getting ready to hibernate for the winter, mainly trying to get in supplies. Had a stove made—you should see it. Burns less wood than a grate, though. Wood is ten dollars per ton and hard to get. I ordered seven and a half karwars (one karwar weighs 1280 pounds) and the chief of police who was to deliver it sent four karwars. On the scales it was a little less than one and a half in spite of being green. I've bought wood before. Yesterday, when I asked where the chief of police was, the governor said that he had run away to Turkestan to get away from me. (This is a joke.)

Just to show you that my cook is better than yours, I'm going to give you my bazaar account for forty-three days. I was busy and let it run over the month.

	Rupees		*Rupees*
Murghi (chicken)	16-0	Lakri (wood)	14-6
Gusht-i-gusfand (mutton)	12-6	Birinj (rice)	2-0
Ande (eggs)	8-0	Fruit	2-6
Dudh (milk)	6-6	"Espice"	3-6
Ghee (oil of butter) . .	5-0	Vegetables	5-6
Shakar (sugar)	6-0		
			($13.12) 82-0

Things are getting high now that winter is coming on. A Kabuli rupee is worth about sixteen cents; there are twelve shahi in a rupee and sixty pice.

In a day or two I am going into Kabul over the line to resurvey it. It will take me ten days if His Majesty doesn't keep me, but he will be leaving for Jalalabad soon. Then I'm coming right back to Jabal-us-Siraj, where among other things I'm going to get a working vocabulary this winter. There are no good interpreters here, and it is a big handicap not to be able to talk. It seemed hopeless at first, but I'm beginning to string a few words together. I can swear beautifully already; they have some lovely cuss words.

I 'most forgot to tell you, a yakdan (weighing about fifty pounds) of papers and magazines arrived about ten days ago, the first I've been able to get through. I reveled a bit; seemed good to get hold of a magazine again. You might enclose a newspaper clipping when you write. Some of my letters have gone astray I know, but since the bank at Peshawar has been receiving and receipting for them, I think they all arrive. There is no post office here. Am going to send this by sepoy to Charikar where there is a sort of one, and inshallah, you will get it maybe. Love to all and each of you.

The Old Man with the White Beard

Kabul, 1 December 1911

WHEN it began to freeze in November I made a new survey for the transmission line forty-one miles across country—was nine days between Jabal-us-Siraj and here, and had some experiences. I had to solder clips on a steel wire in imitation of steel tapes, for they measure with a cotton rope and a pin like a picket pin. My outfit consists of a malik who is familiar with the district and is a judge as well, with a firman from the mustofi saying that I was to be a guest wherever I stopped, a mehmandar, an interpreter, a boy, a cook, a farash, a mehtar, a duffadar, six guards, a captain, a havildar, four sappers and miners, three helpers, and sixteen yabus for the baggage. Together with the men to look after the horses, about thirty all told; couldn't do with less.

There was one man who could stretch a tape and measure out of the lot, a sergeant sapper. You would not think a man could go fifty feet out of line in walking a hundred, but they can. You could hear me for miles trying to get them in line and measure correctly. Am told no one ever measured like this before. With extra careful work they will measure a hundred feet within a foot of right, and won't get out of line more than twenty feet in a hundred.

Everything here is under irrigation; there has not been one-half inch of rain since I got here in June. It rains just about the same as in southern California, but there are many small rivers fed from the melting snow of the Hindu Kush and the Safed Koh. In the seasons the water in many of them is all taken out for irrigation. There is a curious system of underground irrigation canals, or one might say tunnels, here

on the arid plain about twenty miles north of Kabul. This system is used for ground that they cannot get water on from the rivers, and I think it is unique. On higher ground on a slope near the foot of the mountains, generally near some dry nullah, a well is dug; a hundred or so feet from this, another well is dug, and a tunnel made between them and so on, until there is sometimes a chain four miles long. The grade of the tunnel being just sufficient for the water to flow, and much less than the slope of the land, the water finally reaches the surface as it gets to lower ground. Here the tunnel emerges as an irrigation ditch, which is called a *juy,* and there is an endless and intricate network of them in the arid districts of Afghanistan.

The accumulated water from the first few wells often makes quite a stream. I have seen these kariz thirty feet deep; some may be deeper. There is no curbing used, except that some have a short bit at the rim made of a circular ring of baked clay like a sewer pipe to keep the earth from caving in. This is an invention of the Amir, Abdur Rahman. It is said that the tunnels, which are unsupported, frequently cave in, and that a good many lives are lost in this way during the course of construction. Some kariz are built by the government and some by the people, the work being done by special craftsmen who become expert in locating water. Often there are good-sized fish in them up to a foot in length. Whether they are planted there or found the way up from the stream into which the water discharges, I do not know. However, it is worth the time lost to make a considerable detour for a drink from this clear cool water when on the march.

I noticed that grapes are grown here in much the same manner as in Fresno, with short thick stumps about two to four feet high planted in raised rows. The vines are covered with earth and straw to protect them from frost. All the vineyards are surrounded with mud walls from eight to ten feet

high, and then the walls are thatched with thorns; I know, because I had to negotiate about a hundred of them.

Sometimes a malik on the route brought us out some melons, water, and cantaloupe, and they were fine. Crossing a bit of desert, we ran into a man with a donkey-load of fresh grapes, and I bought a seer (sixteen pounds) for a rupee (sixteen cents).

Where we could we stopped in houses and forts, for it was getting damned cold. Snow lies all day. Houses are of mud. Often we rode two krohs to a village and got in after dark. I found a brazier of coals in my room and rugs on the floor; the malik or owner would come in to make his compliments and ask if he could do anything for me. When a man gives the best he has, it's pretty fine.

At night on the desert, when the transmission line ran about twenty miles beyond a spur of mountains which was considered dangerous, I camped out in the open several times. Seven ressalas were not considered sufficient, so they got men from the nearest village to mount guard around my tent at night as well. Eight villagers stood guard beside my men all night—cold as hell too. I slept under all I had and was none too warm; water was frozen in the basin when I got in at six in the evening. I could hear the poor beggars of villagers shivering and talking all night long around fires of thorny scrub they had built to keep from freezing. I might have felt more sorry for them if they had not been the bad characters themselves whom we were guarding against, rendered harmless by being put under the responsibility of guarding me. In a camp like this, no one can pass the guard without giving the password, but one's main safeguard is being under the Amir's protection.

One of the Europeans who came up to Kabul from Kandahar told me that some Afghans he met on the road avowed they would like very much to cut his throat if it were not for the fact that he was a guest of the Amir, and they drew their

fingers across their throats to illustrate. The main fear is of ghazis who are seized with religious fanaticism and the desire to kill an infidel or unbeliever. A man may have done something which according to his belief puts him beyond the hope of redemption, but if he can kill an unbeliever, even if he does not kill and is killed himself, it is a sure pass to the Muslim heaven. I have found that an Afghan loses many of his prejudices against Europeans when he gets to know you.

Bought a sheep for the gang here. Noticed one odd thing; when they killed it, a man cut a hole in the skin of the hind leg and blew the thing up like a balloon. The air going under the skin separated it from the flesh and made it easy to take the hide off—all this by the light of a fire of thorny grass. I've seen camels eat these crackling thorns called camel grass, and although it is nothing but sharp thorns they munch it like clover. My hands are all torn with it.

Imagine getting into a mud-walled sarai after dark and stumbling about amongst the camels, yabus, donkeys, and goats to find your quarters. After I got the men licked into shape a bit, we got along faster, especially after we got away from trees and mud-walled gardens with thorns on top.

They just recently captured five robbers near here and H.M. hung the lot; two men who gave false witness and tried to shield them had their eyes put out. A common mode of execution for highway robbery or plotting against the Amir is to blow them from the gun. Of course, this is a death most dreaded, for a Muslim loses all chance of going to the Muslim heaven. At Kabul, the gun mounted on Bemaru heights north of the city, just beyond the old Sherpur Cantonments, has been used for this purpose for eighty years—and has a record.

His Majesty left for Jalalabad the morning of the day I arrived, and won't be back until April. Sorry I didn't see him. Three of the Europeans have gone down on leave; there

are two left and they go shortly. I'm going back to Jabal-us-Siraj for the winter — nothing doing for the next four months. The mustofi has promised to see me day after tomorrow at three o'clock. He has a bad cold and is confined to the haram, an equivalent to "not at home." Going to shift as soon as I can before it gets colder.

Just bought my boy and khansaman each a pustin, with wool inside like mine, and stockings of the same material. Paid twenty-five and thirty rupees for the coats; they have embroidery on them too — pretty good, but the beggars have done me well. The old khansaman is a good cook and he doesn't rob me. Of course, I kicked about the embroidery and the astrakhan cuffs and trimmings on principle, but they are both as proud as punch. I just had nut cake and apples and cocoa for tea, and cream pudding for tiffin.

I'm going to practice some of your recipes this winter; haven't had time for anything till now. Darby* and Halliday sold me all the stores they had left, so I am pretty well fixed, having saved up most of my tin goods for the winter.

Shortly before arranging to leave Kabul, I saw my friend, the Esteemed Mustofi-al-Mamalik, chancellor of the exchequer, and made a report on the survey. Then I took some pictures of the mustofi and his five-year-old son, Khalil ullah Jan (Sweet Friend of God), who carries a sword and a dagger and also a pistol strapped to his belt, a pearl-handled Smith and Wesson 32 in a leather case. His most foul vocabulary is considered "cute" by Afghans. He curses and calls his father names, spits at Europeans and calls them Kafirs, or unbelievers. A small servant follows this little imp of Satan around with a chair, so that he may sit down when he desires. With few exceptions, the so-called better class pet and spoil their children.

It was the eighth of December and there were about two

*Darby was a geologist employed by the Amir to search for coal mines, precious stones, and valuable ore beds. (Editor's note.)

inches of snow on the ground. From the gate to the mustofi's house there is a grape arbor, and I noticed hundreds of bunches of grapes still on the vines, each bunch tied up in a little white cotton bag. I commented on them and he had some taken down; they were quite fresh and good even though there had been frosts for a month. We had tea and fresh grapes in the mustofi's garden, the sun being warm.

I wrote to you about two weeks ago from Jabal-us-Siraj, so maybe you will hear from me. Halliday wrote from there some time ago and after a month the letter came back to him, although it was carefully directed in Persian. And down in the Foreigners' Office recently I found a packet of drawings which bore the Peshawar P.O. stamp for July. If I had seen H.M. or had thought of it last time I saw him, I could have made some special arrangement for getting mail through from Jabal-us-Siraj this winter; I'll try anyway, but don't be surprised if there is no word from me till spring. While I was writing the dak walla came in with a letter.

Yesterday Miller and I went through the bazaar on a shopping expedition; went on foot and walked about three hours. Quite an interesting sight, the people more than their wares. I bought a couple of files and a saw, the only one I could find without the teeth in backwards—wish I had my little tool kit. There is almost nothing one can buy here, but I'm going to pick up a bit of astrakhan, having seen some of the genuine from Bokhara and Turkestan.

The snow is creeping down the hills, or as the Afghans say, "The old man with the white beard is coming." I am leaving for Jabal-us-Siraj.

Winter Quarters

Jabal-us-Siraj, 15 January 1912
The Month of Rest

JABAL-US-SIRAJ, the site of the old city of Parwan, is just at the foot of the Hindu Kush and there are high white walls on all sides. From the tower window in the fort I can see nearly twenty miles down the Kohistan valley toward Kabul. The Afghan winter is a naked one. Just now everything is a wilderness of snow, dead white. There are no evergreens; the mountains are bare and the trees in the valley are chiefly mulberry; in fact, dried mulberries form one of the chief winter foods. The Afghan mostly hibernates in winter, and I expect that it will be the last of March before we come out. I haven't seen a newspaper for months.

His Majesty and the court went to Jalalabad for the winter the latter part of September, and the Europeans followed. I elected to come up here in order to observe winter conditions. There is not another European within 150 miles and not an English-speaking person on the place. I have a very good cook and boy whom I brought from India with me, and got in a store of wood and provisions to stand a siege. The khansaman buys and cooks my food—ten dollars per month. "Boy" mends my clothes, darns my socks, lays out my clothes, makes my bed, airs my bedding, builds my fire, gets my bath ready and lays out towels and soap, brings my slippers, takes off my boots, helps me dress, brings my breakfast and other meals, dusts my room, orders my horse, sees he's fed, keeps me from being robbed, does my shopping, helps me develop pictures, packs my kit and looks after it on trek, brings the guard, and runs errands—for eight dollars per month.

I selected my tower room in the old fort. I am never quite alone; there is always the guard, with his bayonet fixed, shivering outside my door in his pustin. I do not envy him his job o'nights. What he thinks about it, I can only guess—he makes no sign of any sort. He is responsible to H.M., and that is all that counts.

Needless to say, I spent a very quiet Christmas. Was not troubled by calls or callers. Told the khansaman that if he didn't build me a good Christmas dinner I would beat him with a stick. He grinned and said he was going to karo a plum "puteen," and he did—a very fine one. He's a good pastry cook.

As late as the eighteenth of January we had a very mild winter and no snow that stayed on the ground in the valley. Then we got ten inches in a night, and it's still coming—three feet in forty-eight hours. There's a heated argument going on outside right now over who is going to shovel snow from the roof.

In the winter the kotwal sends out gangs of men to shovel the snow from the government buildings; of course, the householders clear off their own. If the snow were left to melt the roofs would leak, being flat and made of sun-baked mud. To repair a leaky roof one puts on another layer of kahgil, made of mud and chopped straw. This process goes on for years till finally the weight of earth is too much for the supporting poles and they give way, the mud often getting to be two or more feet thick.

A month's steady rain would wash most of the houses away, and a week's continuous rain does much damage, though a long continuous wet spell is unusual. Since the climate is very dry, the water in the rivers is dependent on the snowfall in the mountains. A foot and a half is usually the greatest depth of snow in the valleys, though the people tell of falls four feet deep. Some winters there is practically no snow at all in Kabul.

When it clears up I am going for a run. Wish I could go alone, but my position demands that I have mounted guards and a following of three or four local officials, and also that I go mounted. It would never do to walk. My guard usually consists of two men, but since the Khost rebellion in the south, two men with fixed bayonets go in front and two more behind when I go outside the fort. The other day I escaped from the compound and wandered about a hundred yards away. Was made to understand that this was a very undignified proceeding—I should have been escorted. And, you know, "If you don't conform to custom, custom weeps"; as the Chinese says, "What can do?"

I received some fresh grapes, pears, apples, pine nuts, and parched peas a few days ago, as a gift from my esteemed friend, the Mustofi-al-Mamalik. They were sent out from Kabul.

Give my best salaams to the mem-sahib, and peace be unto you.

2 February 1912

The snow is almost gone now although it is snowing today. It is surprising how I have been able to fill in my time. Between times I study Persian. There is a mirza who comes to me, but he does not speak a word of English, so you can imagine what it is like. He could not look up words in the Persian dictionary until I showed him how. I get a little practice trying to talk to him.

I have only a Persian calendar, and it has kept me busy keeping track of the dates. There are two here. Al Hijra, which is from the time of Mohammed's flight from Mecca, is ordinarily used; this is the third month of 1330. The other is the old Persian solar year, beginning at No Ruz (New Day), the vernal equinox, and used for yearly accounts, crops and seasons. The year beginning March 21, 1912, is the "Year of the Mouse." The calendar gives the English date too, written in Persian, of course. February is spelled

Farwary, or with the equivalent in Persian characters. *Alif, waw,* and *ye* have nearly the same value as our *a, u,* and *y.* There are four *z*'s and three *k*'s. One of the *k*'s I cannot pronounce to save me: *qaf.* Try to pronounce *q* and *k* at the same time—that is as near as I can describe it. The other two are *khe* and *ghain.* There are thirty-two letters in the alphabet. It's slow work; the gutturals and irregular verbs are difficult, but I am getting a small vocabulary. I forgot to mention that the Year of the Mouse is 1291.

Persian is the language of the court and schools, and I think most universally understood, although even Kohistani Persian differs from that spoken in the Kabul district. The dominant tribal language of the country and the bordering hills near the Khyber is Afghani or Pushtu.

Because of its isolation the people of the interior of Afghanistan are little known to Europeans. Even whites in India judge them by their contacts with the border tribesmen. Others read occasionally a brief newspaper account of a raid on the North West Frontier Province, or a punitive expedition to quiet some of the disturbances on the border. All Afghans are generally thought of as being alike, but this is not so; there are many distinct tribes as among the Pathans on the Indian borderland. Besides, there are many distinct racial types among the Afghans. The Kabulis, people from the Kabul district, are a mixed lot: Tajiks of Iranian stock, Hazaras (distinctly Mongolian), Kizilbashes of Turkish origin from Persia, Kafirs from Kafiristan, supposed to be of early Greek (pre-Hellenic) origin, Turkomans, and more I cannot tell. They have all intermarried with the Afghans.

Most people speak of Afghans as being very dark. The border tribes are, but farther north there are many nearly as light as Europeans. Gray and blue eyes are not uncommon, and even light hair or red hair and freckles may be seen. This may be from the European occupation of the country years ago, it is hard to say, but the Afghans are Aryans.

His Majesty, the Amir, has just bought a lot of new cars and some trucks, and now that he has completed a new road to the Khyber, he is building roads and bridges all over the country. The roads are good for motoring except when it rains and they are cut up by the traffic.

I have not seen an American newspaper for a year and none at all for four months. Papers were brought up twice by Europeans coming to Kabul; that is the only way. I tried the kafila, but never got them. My pay comes all in rupees; a month's pay weighs just forty pounds — something to carry about with you. There are no banks and no paper money. Whenever anyone goes down on leave he has to take down rupees for all the others.

If you send me some literature, kindly direct it in care of the Punjab Banking Co., Ltd., Peshawar, N.W.F.P., India. Please write to the agent of the bank and tell him to hold for some of the Europeans coming up. You will remember the instructions I gave as to letters sent here.

I have a thousand tons of freight in Peshawar now.

As they say here, "Manda na bashi!" With basi salaams.

A Telephone Message

Kabul, 17 Safar 1330 A.H.

I HAD one break this winter. A week ago I received word by post that His Majesty, who is in Jalalabad, desired to speak to me by telephone from Kabul. There's the one line from Kabul to Jalalabad—a hundred miles. A messenger also brought shoes for my horse for walking on ice, by order of the mustofi, who very kindly made all the arrangements for my trip and entertainment.

On the third of February I left Jabal-us-Siraj with only a small escort: the chief of police and his brother, a ressala of three or four, Mirza Malik Shah, and the mehtars for the yabus. Took my bearer but left old Mohammad Bx, the khansaman, as he is pretty old for roughing it in the cold weather. We made the fifty-mile trek through the snow, two nights on the way. Most of the time we trailed along with the pack animals, and it was slow going through the pass.

The first day we made Charikar and stopped at Malik Meer Baba's house for the night. This was only a short trek of five krohs. I dined here à la Afghan, fingers for forks, much to the delight of the host, but my boy I think disapproved.

The town of Charikar is ten miles from Jabal-us-Siraj on the road to Kabul. About eight to ten thousand is claimed for its population. The main bazaar is covered over; and most of the shopkeepers are Hindus who do a thriving trade, as the town is on the main road to three of the passes leading to Russian Turkestan and Badakhshan. It is also the center of trade for Kohistan. A little iron ore is smelted here, which comes from the Ghorband district. Powder is also manufactured, and the town contains a branch of the Kabul treasury. The houses are all of mud, the usual Afghan construction.

There are a good many Hindus in Afghanistan who have been here for generations. They are for the most part shopkeepers, traders, or landowners. I do not recall seeing one of them doing common labor. They are the Jews of Afghanistan. According to Islamic law, it is forbidden to charge interest, but there are other ways, and this does not affect charging for exchange. They have the best shops, most of them, in fact, and are the wealthiest merchants. A Muslim cannot compete with them; he is lazy, indifferent, and moreover a spendthrift. When Hindus begin to bury their treasures, it is a sign that there is trouble at hand, and a man prophesying trouble will confirm it by avowing that the Hindus are burying their treasures. A Hindu freely enters Muslim dwellings, and apparently about the only restriction is that he must always wear the yellow lungi.

The next day we did nine krohs, and stopped at the mud-walled kal'ah of Khaja Babu, who is a landed proprietor about twenty miles north of Kabul. This place was new and not encrusted with dirt, and Khaja Babu, having resided in India and visited Kashmir, was rather more interesting and possessed a better knowledge of the fitness of things. We discoursed on Kashmir and the cities of India—partly in Hindustani and partly in Persian. On these trips I am what is called a mehman (guest) and am supplied with food that six men could not eat. Imagine one of your largest platters set before you, piled as high as it would stick with pilau, and being expected to get outside of it. I had fresh grapes, apples, pears, and pomegranates at Khaja Babu's. There is a small square tent supplied me for toilet purposes and this is pitched in the garden or on the roof. There's only the tent.

On the third day we started early and did eleven krohs and got into Kabul by three in the afternoon. The road in most places was only a track in the snow not two feet wide, and the landscape was dead white. The sun was very strong and I had to wear colored glasses to keep from getting snow-

blind; the glare blistered my face. We met long lines of camels, great hairy brutes—forelegs on them like elephants. Mr. Shutur doesn't like to turn out in the snow for you; he gurgles and bubbles and grunts in protest. There were travelers on foot abroad too, many of them local ones, bareleggged and with thin cotton trousers, and others bound for Hazara and Turkestan; these were generally Hazaras whose costumes were varied and old.

Everyone was armed to the teeth, and they saluted you in passing with the usual "Salaam aleikum" ("Peace be with you"), and the reply, "Wa ba aleikum salaam" ("And with you peace"), and always "Manda na bashi" ("May you not be tired"). Bar a village or two, mud-walled, our road lay over a vast expanse of white with nothing to break it save an occasional carcass surrounded by crows, from which a wolfish-looking dog or two would slink away. It was not very cold except in the mornings and for an hour or two when we came over the pass.

On my arrival here I was given quarters in what I take to be the guest chamber in the home of my esteemed friend, the Mustofi-al-Mamalik, chancellor of the exchequer. He was away at the time at his office, and didn't return till four in the afternoon. After greetings, we had tea and dried mulberries in his garden on the sunny side of the house.

My room has a bedstead in it—first time I've slept on a spring mattress since in India. There is a manghal, a sort of charcoal brazier which is supplemented by an oil stove. For lights I have a big lamp on a stand, a lantern, and a candle. The mustofi's butler has supplied me with fruit and a plentiful amount to eat, and last night the mustofi kindly sent me a vase full of narcissus.

This morning after chota hazri, I had tea with the mustofi in the gulkhana, or flower house, a glass-fronted porch heated by a sheet iron stove and filled with potted plants. I showed him some of the kodaks I had taken at Jabal-us-

Siraj, and he pinched about eight. After he went to his office in the city, I stayed in all day. 'Tis now four in the afternoon. The mustofi returned a short time ago, but I have not seen him; he has obliterated himself in the haram. There will be nothing doing today. Tomorrow, inshallah—tomorrow is always a better day than today.

When the sun is well up the mustofi sits outside the gulkhana, receives petitions, gives orders, and talks with his retainers. Here, also, His Excellency generally holds a sort of durbar every afternoon. 'Tis interesting to watch the proceedings, and the different costumes and characters; there are never less than fifty present. Yesterday he sat at a table under a big chinar tree and held durbar. Had some men beaten and nearly started a riot. Some camels and a few hundred sheep were present also.

I heard shouting one morning and on going outside to investigate found the mustofi and his friends shooting at an orange with a small rifle. After greetings, he handed me the rifle and pointed to the orange. I raised the rifle and fired and was lucky enough to hit the orange, splitting it in two halves. The retainers looked at the mustofi. He ordered the orange to be brought to him, examined it, and then handed it to me with the remark that since I had shot it, it belonged to me. Then taking the rifle he handed it to a servant and told him to put it away.

If this letter is sort of patchy (by way of explanation) I've been receiving all day, my own retainers and other gentlemen. They squat about on the floor and we hold conversations with the frequent aid of the dictionary. Malik Shah is quite a help as he has got to the point where he can frequently guess what I'm trying to say.

I have told them how many motorcars can be made in one day, and I know what they think. It reminds me of a yarn that the mustofi solemnly told me one time in the presence of a number of maliks. He said that Afghanistan ex-

ported to India every year 135 tons of sparrow feathers. Can you beat it? There was an interpreter present and I made sure these were not Afghan weights, confirming their being English tons. He would not come down a ton and no one cracked a smile, but it is doubtful if it occurred to them that it would take tons of sparrows to make this quantity of feathers. Later, when someone was talking large, I compared it to the mustofi's feather story, and then everybody smiled. Once the mustofi told me there were so many thousand bricks in a pile. I counted them up and across, multiplied, and told him there was not a third of the number there. Through the interpreter, he told me that it was not good to call a big man like him a liar. The Afghans are great boasters and one always has to use a constant on them, either plus or minus.

Tomorrow is mail day—February 7, and I am mailing this with some letters I've written in the last week or two. Am enclosing some kodaks taken at Jabal-us-Siraj. May you not be tired!

A Guest Is a Friend for Three Days

Jabal-us-Siraj, 23 February 1912

I HAVE just returned from my trip in to telephone His Majesty from Kabul. 'Twas warmer on the way back. Three days to go fifty miles, but you are limited by the speed of the yabus, and then there is always the guard; otherwise with a change of horses or two it could easily be done in a day. I stopped two nights on the way and had my friend Mohammad Azim Khan for company—nice old gentleman. There are as many here as there are millionaires in Milpetas.* He used to be a colonel in the Afghan army when Lord Roberts occupied the country.

All along I noticed little patches of ground with the snow cleared off, sprinkled with grain, where they set snares for larks. At night these snares, which are made of little slip-knot loops of horse hair and fastened at intervals a few inches apart to one hundred yards or more of string, are all wound up on a forked stick and taken home. Otherwise they would be stolen. There were birds in cages for decoys; you could hear them singing from the road.

I have been a guest of the Khans. While we were traveling through Kohistan, one of them, a friendly malik, took me to his guest chamber in the second story of his house, which had a large window facing the road. It was warm and I sat on the window sill stretching one leg along it. My host offered me a chair; I declined it. Then he brought my duffadar and they brought another chair and were very insistent, saying I might fall out of the window. They went off and got old Colonel Mohammad Azim and he added his entreaties. I told him I was perfectly safe. "But," said the old man,

*A little village near San Jose in California. (Editor's note.)

"supposing you fall out; what would the Amir do to us?" I sat on the chair.

I stopped with another malik, Mohammad Jan Khan, an Afghan gentleman and landed proprietor with extensive estates, a home, and a mud-walled fort about eight miles north of Kabul just beyond the Pai Minar (Foot of Minaret) Pass. Had been there a couple of months before. He brought me a chair to sit in, and explained that he thought I might come that way again and so had made the chair for me, having noticed that I was not comfortable sitting cross-legged on the floor. When we were building the transmission line and were near his place, he would invite me to spend the night with him. This meant that he fed not only me, but about twenty of my followers including the horses.

He wears an astrakhan cap, Russian boots, and a sword belt, which place him at once as an Afghan of the upper class. To indicate plainer his title to a gentleman of class, there would not be more than one in ten thousand in this country who could rank with him in education and wealth. His education consists of an ability to read and write and do simple sums; his wealth may be fifty to a hundred thousand dollars.

The man of property has his difficulties in Afghanistan. If he sows his fields, the neighboring villagers are likely to steal his crops. If he plants trees, the people often take them away in the night. Mohammad Jan Khan was quite progressive for an Afghan and had a number of improvements around his place. I complimented him on these and suggested others. He said, "You do not understand these people. As for me, I never let anyone know in which room I sleep at night. Your work is government work and the people are a little afraid." Then his brother spoke up, "It is like this: if we plant four trees, the people come and take them away in the night. They say, 'We have no trees, why should you have trees?' "

Every man's house has high mud walls, which are often

carried six feet or so above the flat roofs to make a screened-in place where the women may sit; and in the hot weather, the whole family sleeps on the roof. There is window glass only in the houses of the well-to-do, and then only in one or maybe two windows. Most of the houses have an inner court where the women can go unveiled; no one is allowed to see them except the members of their own immediate family.

Some of them must be good looking, judging from the little girls one sees. The burka which they wear goes over the top of the head, is gathered around the line of the forehead, and falls to the feet. There are two holes that are covered with netting for the eyes. Little girls of only twelve years of age will ask for the burka; they want to be young ladies!

When visiting the Khans I am provided with a chair, but during tiffin I have eaten with the others, and in the manner of all Afghans—barring the royal family. It requires quite a bit of dexterity to shoot a large handful of pilau into your mouth with your thumb without spilling. Pilau has a rice foundation, containing chicken and other meat, plums, raisins, shredded orange peel, or bits of everything. Kabob is very good, alternate pieces of fat and lean skewered on a willow wand or the cleaning rod of a rifle, and grilled over coals. Nan, the Afghan bread, is made from stone-ground whole-wheat flour and is baked in flat cakes on a lid or in the native way: a round hole is dug in the ground about two feet deep and the sides made smooth; a fire is made in this and when there are but coals left, the nan, which is mixed like Mexican tortilla, is quickly plastered on the side of the hole. When it falls off it is done. (A little sand in it does not matter.) It is sweet, wholesome, and a staple like pilau.

Tea drinking is quite the fashion, although it is a comparatively recent innovation among the poorer people. The porcelain tea pot, cups, and saucers are brought from Russia. They are all pretty much alike, except some are ornamented with a pattern in blue and some in red. These will be brought in

on a tray covered with an embroidered cloth. They drink green tea mostly. The servant will pour tea into a cup, rinse it around, tip it into another cup, and repeat the process. Then he will break large lumps of sugar from one of the cones imported from Austria, and fill the cups half full of sugar. The more sugar the greater hospitality. After drinking a number of cups, an Afghan will finish up with a cup of talkh, bitter tea without milk or sugar, in order to take away the cloying taste of the previous ones. If the spoon is left in the cup when the servant takes it, that signifies that sugar is wanted; if it is left in the saucer, a cup of talkh is desired; and if the cup is inverted, the guest has finished. Tea is drunk not during a meal, but after the food has been removed, or when a guest calls—first tea, then business.

Most Afghans of the upper class have no respect for the European (dog of an unbeliever) and no desire to meet him socially. But when an acquaintance has once been established it often leads to a warm personal friendship, even though it may not be necessary as a matter of policy. There is no host more hospitable than the Afghan; he is generally endowed with this great Oriental virtue. He gives you of his best and much more than you can eat. Yet, the Afghans have a saying, "A guest is a friend for three days."

From the Tower Room of the Old Fort

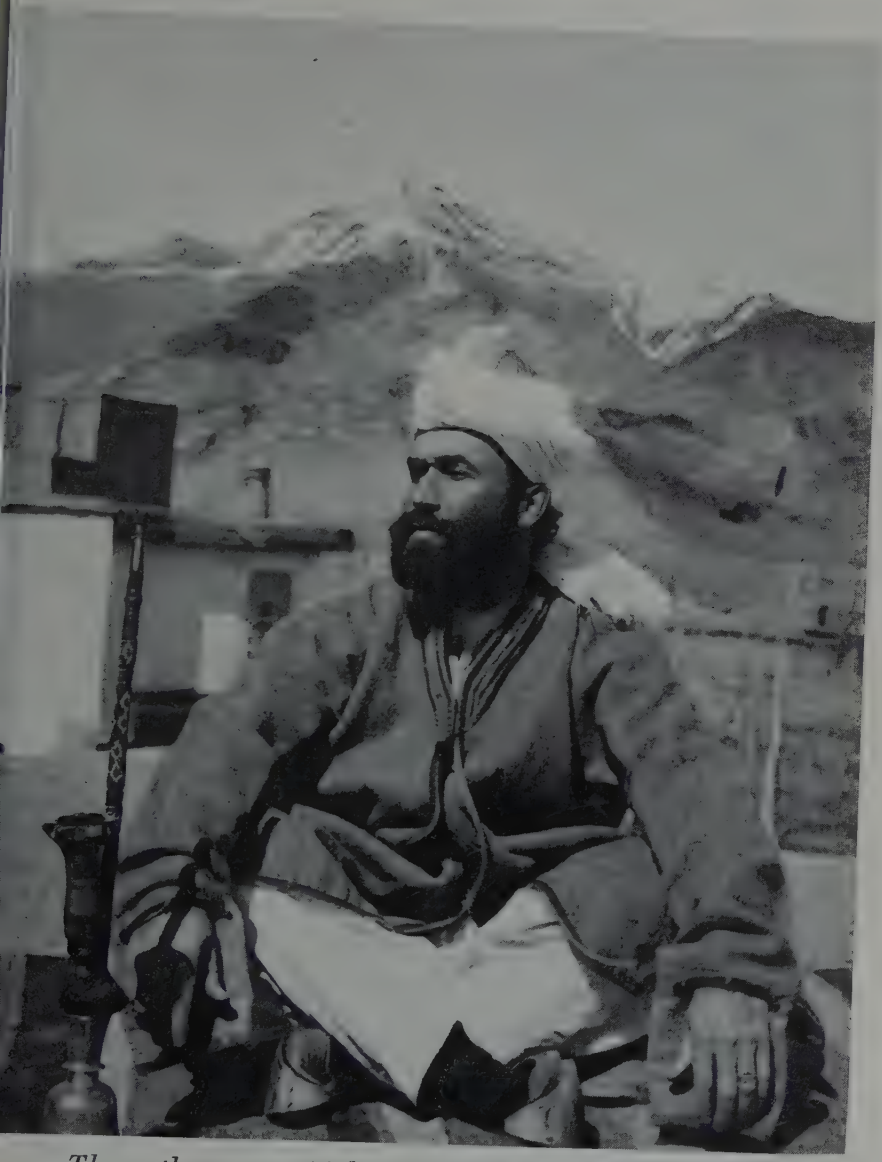
Jabal-us-Siraj, 2 Rabi'ul Akhir 1330 A.H.

A LITHOGRAPHED newspaper, *Siraj ul Akhbar,* has recently been started in Kabul. I have the first copy; it contains translations from the English papers. I cannot read much but the date and a few headlines—the language is too highfalutin for me. You see Afghanistan is very progressive.

When I came back from Kabul I had some surveying to do for His Majesty. One day I had moved the instrument ahead, and the sapper who was holding the rod was facing the other way; I sang out to him in my best Persian, "Oho! Sapper Miner, eyes of you in your backside are?" That pleased the others, and the sapper was relegated to rear chain and guyed for the rest of the day. Sure, I have troubles, but there are so many, and more and larger coming, that there is no use worrying.

My friend, Turah Baz Khan, was in to pay his respects yesterday, and later very kindly sent me a dozen larks. I had pot pie tonight; the pastry was as good as you could make, too. My roof, which is of earth and flat, leaked while I was gone. In fact, all of them leak when it rains and whenever the snow isn't cleared away. We found the natives getting ready for duck shooting now—decoys spotted about in all available places. They say that the ducks cannot get over the high ranges in the cold weather and return here—a few of the early birds, I suppose.

I had grilled larks for tiffin today, and a French chef could not have served them any better. They were done to a turn and the bills tucked under the wing, top of the head removed so the tidbit of the brain was exposed where it could be lifted



The author as an Afghan. "I have grown a beard this winter and look like one of the elect."

The old fort at Jabal-us-Siraj in midwinter.

His Majesty, on his white horse, with a cavalcade of courtiers.

The old fort lies at the foot of the Hindu Kush.

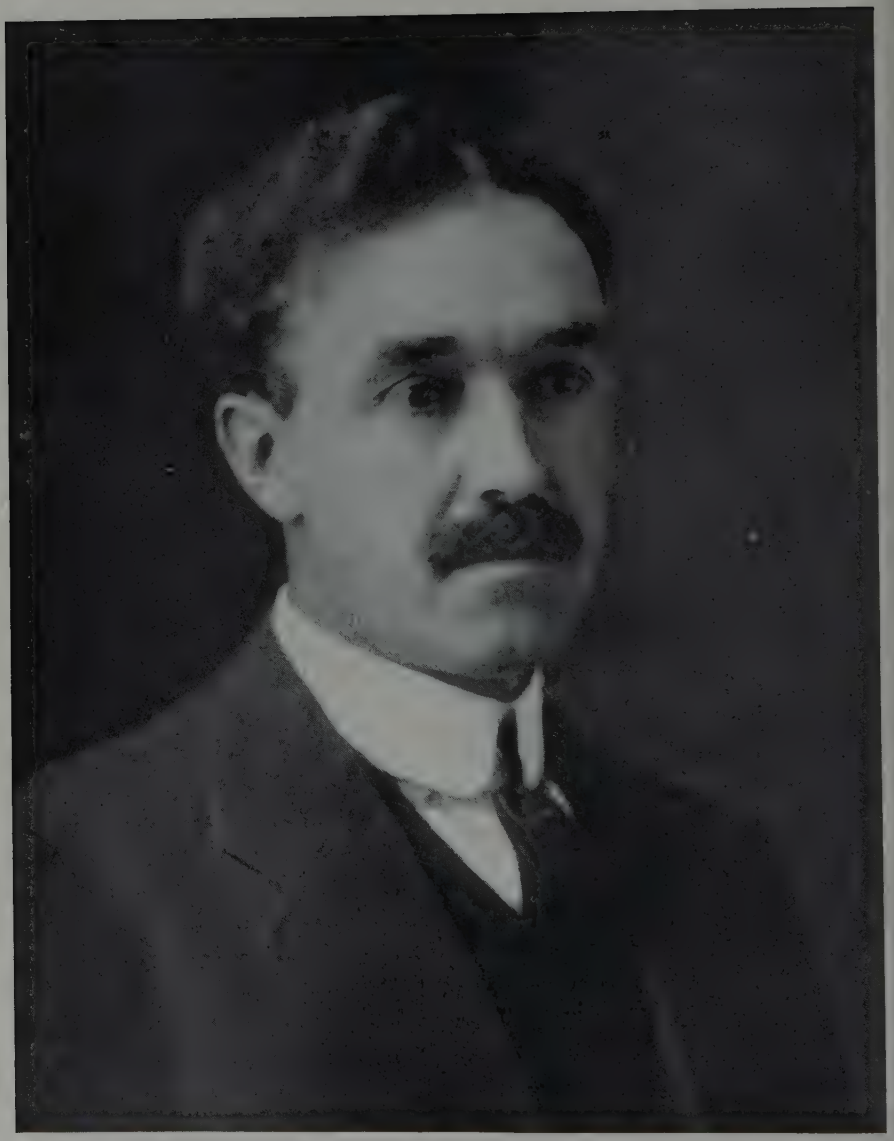
The dak wallas, who carried the Amir's mail on foot over sparsely settled country and high mountain passes.

Looking across the Deh Afghan toward the Ark enclosure. The main palace is in the background near the clock tower.

His Majesty's carriage and mounted escort at the entrance of the Id Masjid in Kabul.

A typical Afghan village on the right bank of the Salang River across from Jabal-us-Siraj.

The Lattaband Pass, looking toward Kabul.



A. C. Jewett

out. I sent my compliments to the khansaman. First time I have ever done the like; it generally serves just not to swear at 'em, but I have always noticed that a little judicious blather to the cook works wonders. It's working already. The khansaman just sent up for some charmaghzes—I mean walnuts and pistachios—wait until you see the cake I get! The old man is great on whipped cream. I have had whipped cream, I believe, every day for months with custards, in cake, with tarts, blancmange, on fruit. I'm getting tired of it, but am afraid of hurting the old man's feelings. You can hear him pounding away at it every afternoon.

Once I expressed a liking for scrambled eggs for hazri. I stood it as long as I could. Then I told the boy to tell him that if he gave me the same thing for hazri every day, some day he would find me a corpse and he would lose all his back pay. I have never had the same thing twice for hazri since. I have asked for hot cakes and specified twice a week. It is a mistake ever to express a liking for any particular thing, for if you do you will be fed to death with it. They make a variety without being told. I very seldom ask for any particular thing—just mess something up and leave it on the plate, that's all I have to do. "Is master sick?" "No." Then there is a transformation.

Every month I carefully check up each item on the bazaar bill (I hope you do so too). It doesn't matter a damn whether I use tinned stuff or not; the bill is always just about the same, though it would grow larger monthly if we did not go through this form. Now if your khansaman were supposed to "eat itself," and had not drawn any pay for five months and you knew he didn't have a bank account, what would you conclude? My boy gets twenty-five kalladar a month, fifteen of which is paid to the bank at Peshawar for his family every month; that leaves him three dollars and thirty cents a month to spend here. (Just by way of explanation, a rupee kalladar is an Indian rupee, worth 32.46 cents. *Kal-*

ladar means "with the head." The Kabuli rupee is without, and is worth about half.) I notice he has bought himself a new coat, turban, cap, long stockings, and so forth. What would you think? I tell you, a careful housekeeper has to keep close watch. Of course I'm being robbed; I have not used five dollars worth of tinned stuff this winter, but it is all out of about thirty cents a day. Skilled labor is sixteen cents per day, and ordinary labor one third of that.

Once I suggested to the boy that dandelions would make good greens, and found that I had already been eating them. It is fortunate that we can live on mushrooms and greens this month, for bar potatoes, carrots, and onions, vegetables are scarce just now. For tiffin I had oyster patties (what was in them I don't know, but they were good), boiled tongue and mushrooms, bread and strawberry jam. We finished the butter last night; there is some stored in Kabul, but Miller is away at Jalalabad with the key.

The dakie came about an hour ago with a letter from California dated December 31, and also letters from Kashmir, including a wedding card from a former assistant there. When I go down on leave I'm to bring Dean* a white cat by way of reciprocation for some articles he sent for me from Kashmir.

Shortly before coming here I subscribed through an agent for some magazines, but they never turned up. I have the *Electrical World* and *Life* only, which have come twice so far. My friend the mirza saw some pictures in *Life* of motor cars with ladies on the front seat, and he told me that was dead wrong. No veils either—scandalous!

Your postcards came by the same mail as the letter. Many thanks! At the same time I note you took seven weeks to get a dozen postcards, and here I have been sending you pictures laboriously made with my own hands. And does it oc-

*Dean was the owner and manager of the hotel for Europeans in Peshawar. (Editor's note.)

cur to you when I write to you for newspaper clippings in November '11, and you write to ask what kind (I refuse to answer) that I would get them about September '12? Never mind! You will be sorry for me up here where I did not hear till just the other day from a kind friend of the doings in Persia, and as you might say, Persia is just around the corner.

I haven't spoken English for months. There's a Scotchman up here; he's at Jalalabad now, but we were both at the Baber Sarai in Kabul for a while. He had his copy of Burns with him, and I quoted Burns to him until he thought I was Scotch.

At the entrance of the fort one of my guards is carving leopards from snow, the leopards' spots being made with black and red dyes. Among the Afghans these animals are considered works of art. We have had a bit of snow here, as you will see if you get the pictures I have sent you. I enclosed one in a letter to His Majesty, and he asked for the negative to enlarge. It would be a good idea to publish several for the benefit of persons who, when Afghanistan is mentioned, remark, "It is very hot place, is it not?" And I find that many people locate Afghanistan "somewhere in Africa."

You can count on getting fewer letters from me when we start work again. The working season is all too short. This letter will be mailed about March 18, inshallah. Khuda hafiz (God keep you).

Jabal-us-Siraj, 11 Rabi'ul Awwal 1330 A.H.

I should be glad if you would bring the following to the attention of that learned hakim, my esteemed doctor friend, and I trust that being a godly man he will desist from his labors in conjunction with the undertakers for a sufficient time to consider my situation. By way of preamble, this morning, I was called into consultation, through the medium

of my valet, in connection with the four-day-old son of the baghban (if it had been a girl, it wouldn't have mattered so much). I learned that the child had as yet passed nothing, fluid or otherwise. The only thing I could think of was nitre (it is used for horses). Then it occurred to me that a rupee's worth of bazaar nitre might prove injurious to a child of such tender age, so I hunted out an old saying and recommended an injection of water of the temperature of milk (new). Inshallah, the child will live.

One of the chaps here has a big bottle of croton oil. A drop of this on a lump of sugar is as effective as a stick of dynamite, but a physic for these people has to be from two to three times stronger than we use to be effective.

The old hakim here is a much better cook than doctor; in fact, we call him "Sure Death." Last fall I was routing the sappers and miners out of their tents. One man, a Hazara, who was kneeling over a little fire of sticks, said he was sick and going to die. We jollied him and told him he was mistaken, but he insisted. Had them send for the local hakim. Three hours later I returned from the bund and passed his tent. They told me the hakim had been there and the man had been buried an hour. Quick work!

Recently, I passed a blind man on the bund. I asked him if his eyes had been put out. He said no, he had had smallpox, and the ḥakim, the local doctor, gave him some powder to put in his eyes; therefore he was blind. Yesterday, one of the guards came and showed me some of the powder that had been sent him for his eyes. I tasted it; God knows what it was.

A while back, an old man with a very large goiter came to me. He brought his fee with him, a big rooster under each arm. What can I do? I tell them I'm no doctor and cannot help them. They think I'm lying—that two roosters aren't enough, and they can't afford a sheep. What a field for a faith-healer! Zinda bashi! (May you live!)

Jabal-us-Siraj, 8 Rabi'ul Akhir 1330 A.H.
The first month of the Year of the Mouse

Your letter of the tenth of February has reached me. I have to pay forty cents an ounce for the rubbish sent me. And here you use thick paper, leave a margin of two inches all around and only write on one side—three sheets and nothing on the last one but your signature, just when I'm getting my mail down to two dollars a time. Suppose you had to pay a rupee for all your letters? Now will you mind?

'Tis snowing again today, but I think, inshallah, I can have this mailed tomorrow. The post office is twelve miles away at Charikar. I get a receipt from the P.O. and again from the bank. (Excuse me a minute, the roof is leaking and I had to move.) Two of my friends split a one-cent postcard and a one-cent stamp between them to send me New Year's greetings (cost me thirty-six cents).

Books and magazines are sent to Peshawar, with a letter to the manager of the bank telling him to hold them until some European is coming up. I've never yet received anything by kafila. It is no easy job getting letters through.

There are no trees here, as I told you, and no way of sending them out, unless you want scrub willow or mulberry. Trees indigenous to this part of the country are niks. Sometime when I go down to India I can send you some. As for samples of handicraft, there is absolutely nothing. And fossils and relics—so far I have dug up an old camel bell down about fifteen feet, and that is all. I did hear a yarn of a shepherd finding some ancient coins of gold as large as a saucer, and not knowing what they were, he made necklaces for some of his sheep.

The dak with your letter came a couple of hours too late. Miller was just leaving for down country and my yabus were loading for here. I have had lots of time to write since, but I could have written better then, and besides, this scheme looks different to me about three times a week. His Majesty

wanted me to make a survey of the other side of the river. That is why he sent for me. I had sized up everything within reach, that's why I came up here — but there is nothing to fit the machines already shipped, and still things might have been different. "Kismet" and let it go at that.

The Esteemed Mustofi-al-Mamalik, chancellor of the exchequer and chief malik of Kohistan, who has remained in Kabul, was appointed by H.M. to make arrangements for men and supplies. Occasionally he comes to Kohistan with a procession of followers — guards, maliks, and retainers. I have played chess with the mustofi this winter, and he beats me every time.

We are putting in a dam with no possibility of getting to bedrock, but it will be low and I am going to put enough material in it and in front of it to keep it from floating. We started in with wooden shovels, and after a personal request I borrowed the hand fire-pump from the Amir's palace. But I shall not write to you about my work. If you knew what I have before me here! What the outcome will be God knows; I don't. Someday, inshallah, I shall have a vine and fig trees of my own to sit under and smoke a pipe.

Just before I left Kabul last December, Darby turned up from Kandahar with about an ounce of mud in a bottle and some chunks of quartz which looked good to me. H.M. had sent him to look for a vein they had lost in an old mine down there and he found it. When I heard from him the other day, he was still waiting for an audience to discuss it with His Majesty. He has been up here looking for coal; has found bits, but this country is all torn up, shattered, and twisted, and you cannot follow anything. Generally speaking, the country about here is very much like Arizona in many respects and appearance.

I have grown a beard this winter and look like one of the elect. Am enclosing a picture for your kind consideration. My paper is about finished, going bad as well, but am get-

ting some up when my assistant comes. Crawford is due in Bombay about the last of March, and here about the end of April. I think His Majesty, the Amir, will return to Kabul about that time.

Really I was glad to hear from you. Give my love to the mem-sahib and remember me to the bachas. Write again on thin paper and tell me who is president of the U.S.A. May you never be tired, and may Allah have you in his keeping.

RECEIVED FROM HIS MAJESTY*

Jalalabad, 3 Rabi-al-Sani 1330
23rd March 1912

After royal kindness, be it known to Esteemed Mr. A. C. Jewett, Chief E. Engineer, Jabal-us-Siraj, that as you know fresh fruits preserved in boxes generally come from San Francisco, California, and you also know that all kinds of good fruits are the product of Afghanistan where they grow excellently.

Now we want you, if you can, to correspond with an expert who may be quite capable of preserving fresh fruits in syrups and tins. First, you should inquire on what salary and what terms he will come, and after that when we get your report, we will decide what ought to be done.

(SIGNED BY HIS MAJESTY) SIRAJ-UL-MILLAT-I-WADDIN
KING OF AFGHANISTAN AND ITS DEPENDENCIES

Jabal-us-Siraj, 1 April 1912

His Majesty Siraj-ul-Millat-i-Waddin, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
YOUR MAJESTY,

I have the honor of receiving Your Majesty's firman last evening, and in reply to Your Majesty's inquiry regarding the drying and preserving of fruits, I beg to state that as my home is in the center of the large fruit-raising district near

*Translated by Mirza Malik Shah. (Editor's note.)

San Francisco, I am acquainted with two of the chief manufacturers of preserved fruits there, and have written them asking them to select an expert fruit preserver, and to send the information desired by Your Majesty. I have also asked them to send some photographs of the fruit preserving process and all other information, that Your Majesty may see it and make a decision.

As it takes about six weeks for a letter to go there and six weeks for one to come back, it will be about three months before the reply is received here.

Hoping the information I have written for, when it comes, will be all that Your Majesty desired, I have the honor to be Your Majesty's most obedient servant.

A. C. Jewett

Special Runners Carry the Amir's Dak

THE Afghan dak walla carries the mail packet and has an adventurous route which takes him over lonely roads infested by bandits, into bazaars where the shopkeepers bargain vociferously with their customers, across long stretches of silent plains uninhabited except for wolves. One night he may lie down in a crowded sarai with caravans of camels and Hindu merchants on their way to Persia; another time he may be eating pilau and kabob in the home of some friends.

Two dak wallas on the Turkestan-Kabul route arrived here in the snow at Jabal-us-Siraj. One was armed with a sword, and the other carried a spear with bells on the shaft, which is the badge of the dak walla. Every proud recipient of a letter must sign for it in the book which is part of the Afghan mail carrier's equipment. The same spear and bells is also carried by the dak walla in the outlying districts of India. The soft jingling of the bells which signals his approach is often a welcome sound to Europeans who live in these remote districts.

I asked one of these men what the spear was for, and he replied that it was to fight off the wolves which attacked them in the passes and mountain districts. They told me that one method of scaring wolves away was to take off a lungi, throw it out in front of them on the snow, and wiggle it around like a snake. Another way was to get down on all fours and jump and shout. These devices drive the wolves away most times.

The Amir's mail is carried from India to Kabul in three days over the high mountain passes by dak runners, men on foot, who travel night and day. One man takes it over his

beat, then another takes it, and so on. There are change stations along the way. Some of the routes are through sparsely settled country, and in winter it is often difficult going over the higher mountain passes.

The Afghans print their own postage stamps. For letter post there are: the rupee, two abbasi, one abbasi, and a government franking stamp which franks any weight. There is a parcel post, but it is not much used except for papers. The country does not belong to the Postal Union,* and the internal postage is three meskals' weight for a rupee. This works out at just under thirty-six cents per ounce at normal exchange.

My letters come to the bank at Peshawar, where they seal them all in one envelope and forward them. The Afghan post office puts on the stamps, one abbasi for one meskal weight. (I put on the Indian stamps.) An abbasi is approximately five and a half cents, and six and a half meskals equal one ounce. Have you noticed the peculiar design of the Afghan stamp? Very nice design.

A native seldom mails a letter which weighs over a meskal. I get two ounces of mail franked a week; for any over this, either incoming or outgoing, I have to pay forty cents an ounce; that is why I write on both sides of the paper. Europeans used to get their mail free, but I was told that a lady doctor in the Amir's employ started getting up hats, clothes, and goods for sale. A complaint was made which resulted in an order reducing the free allowance to two ounces a week. We anathematize the people who send us advertising matter in sealed letters and those who use ten-inch envelopes and heavy paper.

*Afghanistan joined the Universal Postal Union in 1928. (Editor's note.)

Kabul, Afghanistan, 16 Muharram 1330 A.H.

W. & L. E. Gurley, Troy, New York, U.S.A.

DEAR SIRS:

May you live long! May you be in good health! Your esteemed favor has just reached me. Now, why in the name of the father of all the shaitans, don't you, before you inflict your advertising matter on people in foreign countries, send a chaprasi or other slave to the post office to get a postal guide (supplied free by the government) and ascertain whether the persons you are addressing are within the Postal Union or off the map? The postage rate from India to Afghanistan is forty cents an ounce, and your letter cost me eighty cents. I am so situated that I have to take everything that comes, in order to get my legitimate mail. Two weeks ago, I received a package, beautifully done up, containing very ornate and useless advertising matter. The postage amounted to a little over five dollars. When you write your apology, please confine it to half a sheet of paper and direct c/o the Punjab Banking Co., Ltd., Peshawar, N.W.F.P., India. This will only cost me twenty cents and you will then owe me just an even dollar. Please remit by draft on Bombay. This letter will also cost me twenty cents Afghan postage, plus five cents Indian postage, but I will donate that to the cause, as it were.

If you send me any more unsolicited advertising matter, please enclose exchange on Bombay to cover, at the rate of forty cents an ounce. Otherwise, Zinda na bashi—which means "May you die suddenly!"

P.S. On second thought, you might send me your manual, mark it plainly, "ADVERTISING MATTER, OF NO VALUE" and address c/o the Punjab Banking Co., as above. It will be brought up by kafila or by some European coming up in the spring. Inshallah, I may get it and possibly it might be of use.

Yours faithfully,

A. C. JEWETT

The Rural Kohistanis

FROM Jabal-us-Siraj one can look southeast across the Kohistan valley for twenty miles to the mountains. The river Salang lies in the foreground, the Nilu on one side, and the Ghorband on the other. Above the Salang is a typical mountain home—all occupied by one family of three generations, comprising about thirty people. It is built into the barren slope in three large sections, one above the other; and below near the river is a group of mulberry trees and a little patch of cultivated ground.

A typical Afghan village lies in the valley on the right bank of the Salang, a group of mud houses huddled closely together. In places like this, grain, vegetables, fruit, bread, and cakes are the chief articles sold in the bazaars. Some dukans keep a few bolts of calico and a small number of cheap trinkets. When I rode down through the village and stopped in the bazaar, one of the dukandars seated himself near his produce with a balance scale in his hands, and let me take a picture of his market. My guard, the ressala, looked on, armed with rifles.

The little mud villages of Kohistan are exposed to wide ranges in temperature—sun-baked and dry in summer and so cold in winter that the natives sleep with their houses tightly banded up. There are some fireplaces and practically no stoves. Most of the houses are heated by manghals, iron pans from eighteen inches to two feet in diameter, filled with charcoal or embers from a wood fire which has been allowed to burn down outside. The fumes from these manghals are very conducive to headaches.

A low table or stool is often placed over a brazier of charcoal, and the whole covered with quilts. This is called a

"sandali." The whole family, and visitors as well, lie on the floor with their legs under the sandali, their bodies radiating out from it like spokes in a wheel. Some of them spend most of the winter in this position. When they come out in the spring their legs are weak and wobbly; they are a bit smelly too as they sleep in their clothes and never change. Then about the first thing they do is to go to a hammam and take a much needed bath, sometimes using a special clay. Most of them never see soap. Clothes are washed by beating them with a rock or with a wooden club.

Of course, there are the ceremonial washings for prayers prescribed by the Koran, but these are very perfunctory and do not accomplish much in the way of cleanliness. I have seen a man wearing long boots simply dip his hand in the water and draw his fingers across the toes—the symbol of washing—instead of washing his feet before prayers. Russian boots are not as easy to remove as the Afghan shoes, which can be stepped out of like slippers.

The ordinary dress of an Afghan includes a voluminous pair of tombans, or white cotton trousers, the waistband being ten feet in circumference. When this is gathered in, it hangs in folds, and your dandy is as particular about the way these folds hang as we are of the creases in our trousers. A long cotton shirt is bound around the waist by a kamarband and falls outside the trousers to the knees. Those who can afford it have a waistcoat, usually heavily embroidered. On the head is wrapped a lungi, often a dirty piece of cloth used for many purposes including a handkerchief. Some wear shawls, and the Kohistanis in particular wear a pirahan, a coat made of homespun much like the chapan. It is the fashion to have the sleeves very long, with horizontal slits in the sides to put the hands through. I have seen sleeves so long that they just cleared the ground—for style of course.

The wealthy members of Afghan society wear frock coats, which look odd at first over cotton trousers. Many of them

have secondhand ones collected by Jews and sent into the country. Old uniforms are very popular; one of my subadars wore a coat which bore the legend, "Inspector No. 48," on the collar. It is not unusual to see an Afghan strutting down the main street of Kabul in an admiral's uniform, cocked hat, gold braid and all. The Afghan Beau Brummel is in his glory if he can wear a bright red or blue coat and a sword belt, and carry a fountain pen. The sword is mightier than the pen in Afghanistan, but the pen is more fashionable. A pustin, tanned yellow, often embroidered, and sometimes with astrakhan collars and cuffs, is worn by the natives who can afford it, and by Europeans during the winter in Afghanistan and along the frontier. But there is seldom any better covering for their legs than their cotton trousers, and their feet are bare in their shoes even in the coldest weather. The Afghan shoes are very heavy, turn up in a long loop at the toes, and have bottoms studded with nails. These nails, which have very large heads, are handmade by the local blacksmith and cause most of the punctures on the road.

I think that fully half, if not the greater percentage of Afghans, are named after the Prophet. There are: friend, gift, slave, and sacrifice of Mohammad, rose and flower of Mohammad, besides the endless combinations of Ali Mohammad, and Mohammad Ali. They are strong too on high-sounding titles, and some ragamuffin will bear the name of Prince, King David or Thousand Kings. There are many old Bible names, such as Daud, Yusuf, Yakub, Abrim, and Ismail—David, Joseph, Jacob, Abraham, and Ishmael. I have known several Sikandars (Alexanders) too. A man does not use his father's name; his name is written down Ali Mohammad, son of Mohammad Shah, so that he will not be confused with the other Ali Mohammads. With several brothers all having different mothers, and their names giving no clue, it is difficult to keep track of genealogies.

They seldom know their ages. A man will say, "God will-

ing, I am so old," or, "I was born the year of the big earthquake," and again, "I had a beard when the English came last." The old men dye their beards to make themselves look younger, and an older man is always spoken of as a rish safed even though his beard may not have turned gray. To call a man kuhna is not good, for in their idiom it means without vigor and is always used in derision.

In their salutations Afghans are very ceremonious and will exchange compliments for five minutes. An ordinary form of greeting, especially if the man addressed is working, is "Manda na bashi!" ("May you not be tired!"), to which one replies "Zinda bashi!" ("May you live!"). Europeans who are newcomers generally make the mistake of saying "Zinda na bashi!" ("May you not live!"), which the Afghans regard as a great joke. When a Kohistani meets a friend after a separation, he bends his head over the friend's left shoulder and says, "Jor asti?" Then over the right, "Bekhair asti?" and once more over the left, "Khub jor asti?" All these are variations of "Are you well?"

But Afghans, even those of the better class, are none too polite to Europeans, especially those they do not know. One ghulam bacha said to another once, "Why do you always salaam farangis when you meet them? I always spit." *Farangi* means, literally, "foreigner," but is used in a contemptuous sense, their polite designation for a European being "kharaji."

I think the uncivilized barbarians are always more polite to each other than are good Christians. There's a reason.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 28 Rabi'ul Akhir 1330 A.H.

Last night I was invited by my mehmandar, a nice-looking young chap about twenty-one, to come down to an entertainment he had provided. They called it a "nautch," but there was no dancing—only music and singing. Of course, no females were present.

A short time before, I had heard a Kohistani band learning to play without written music. The instructor gave a toot or two and the others tried to follow him, and while they played tunes of sorts, it was mostly a repetition of a few notes over and over again. Strangely enough, all had European instruments rather than the typical Afghan ones, which are: a kind of flute, the tambur, and the tabla.

But the nautch was a native tamasha. When the time came I went down through the compound, Boy leading with a lantern and a chair. There was a room about fifteen by twenty feet, and twenty people, including my khansaman, Boy, and the guards. There were three musicians. One played a tambur, a sort of cross between a guitar and a mandolin, very deep, with seventeen strings, six gut and eleven wire; another, a tabla drum, played with the fingers. The body, made of earthenware, was about a foot in diameter at one end and four inches at the other, eighteen inches long. The large end was covered with goatskin and the small end was open, with a brazier of charcoal in front to keep the head warm, so as to give it good tone. The performer sat cross-legged and balanced it against his knee with his bare foot. The other instrument was a sihak, a small triangle.

When I entered, the mirza was saying his prayers in one corner, the music was going, and the farash was making tea before an open fire in a fireplace. The room was lighted by a small oil taper and a candle. Boy was invited to sit by me (these people make few distinctions), but he went to the far side of the room. After tea was served, the musicians warmed up and sang a duet, a love song in Afghani. The tabla walla was a good singer, an artist and throaty; you could see far down his throat when he threw back his head for a strong note. He kept time with his heel and body, and his skill with the drum was fascinating. There is a certain rhythmical note that you find in Egypt, India, and Africa, and the American Indians have it. It has a sort of hypnotic effect after you

have heard it for a while. The *tum tum tum* is rendered in a peculiar way that is hard to describe—monotonous and insistent.

It was a picturesque sight in the half-light, the three singers or musicians in one corner and the audience scattered about the side of the room, sitting cross-legged. I remarked to the mehmandar, "Midanam angusht-i-oo bisyar sakht ast." ("I know his fingers [the drummer's] are very hard.") This was extempore, so you see I am beginning to speak a little.

There were no intermissions, but after an hour and a half I excused myself, thanked the mehmandar for his entertainment, which was very good indeed, gave the musicians a dib apiece, and departed for my room above. We crossed the courtyard and started upstairs, and the guard on the landing sang out "In sowt chiye?" ("Who goes there?") My boy answered, "Ashna!" ("Friend!") The mehmandar saw me to my room and again I thanked him and gave him leave. "May God be with you!" and "God keep you." Next day the mehmandar wanted to know if I were pleased with the entertainment. I told him very much so; the music was excellent.

Khuda hafiz!—and may you never be tired!

Idling at Baber Sarai

THE Baber Sarai and its garden, Baber Bagh, lie in the Chardeh Valley just outside of Kabul. Nearby on one side the hills rise sharply, crowned by old fortifications which once guarded this entrance to the city, the Sheer Darwaza or Lion's Gate. Across the valley Ishmai Hill stands out like a sentinel, the remains of an old wall still reaching to its highest point. Bemaru Heights lie in the distance above Kabul, and nearer are the machine shops and woolen mills along the Kabul River, which flows through this gate or gap in the hills.

Behind high walls in the Baber Bagh are the mehman khana, which is a guest house surrounded by chinar trees, the haram sarai, a little masjid or mosque for prayers, made of pure white marble imported from India, and the tomb of Baber Shah. The founder of the great Mogul dynasty, Baber Shah, "The Tiger," conquered India in 1525 and ruled at Delhi. There remains no splendid mausoleum like those in the neighborhood of Delhi for the Mogul emperors who followed him. A plain tomb, an inscribed headstone, and a recessed structure, made to hold lighted tapers in its receptacles on anniversaries, are tucked away in an obscure and neglected corner of the garden of Baber Sarai near Kabul.

Baber, Kabul, 7 May 1912

I returned to Kabul six days ago and found that Crawford and Kelly had arrived on April 28.* Seemed good to speak English again after five months and to get papers and news of the outside world. His Majesty returned to Kabul from

*Patrick Kelly and Perry Crawford were assistant engineers for the hydroelectric plant at Jabal-us-Siraj from 1912 to 1914. (Editor's note.)

Jalalabad the day after I got here. I can do no work, for I have neither seen him nor had any word from him. We are just idling here at Baber. There has been a little disturbance fifty miles south of here, where they have been sending troops for some time. I think this has been partly the cause of His Majesty's delay in starting our work. You may have seen something of the Khost rebellion in the papers.

This morning the three of us went for a ride to the Chihil Sutun, one of the Amir's palaces—a very prettily situated one about four miles up the river from Kabul. It is vacant, though furnished, so we were shown through it and took some pictures. This palace was formerly called "Indiki," but was renamed "Chihil Sutun" by the Amir. He has a great fancy for renaming things and places. Afterwards he imposes a fine of five rupees on anyone who calls them by their former names. All those about him must carry no less than five rupees, ready for the fines. *Chihil Sutun* means, literally, "Forty Pillars," and is an expression used to denote countless pillars.

When I came in from Jabal-us-Siraj, I stopped over night with my friend Khaja Babu, and he gave me some fresh grapes—last year's. These had been kept nine months through hot and freezing weather. They were large white husaini grapes which had been packed in cotton wool in small wood boxes. Can you beat it?

Tomorrow is mail day. I am holding this on chance of seeing His Majesty before mailing it, but there is no telling when. We have been having a good bit of rain. I think it is about over now, though; the calendar calls this the "first dry month," and it has been pretty wet. May you not be tired!

Baber Sarai, 18 Jumad al Sani 1330 A.H.
The Year of the Mouse

There are ten Europeans here now in Kabul—four of us in Baber: Miller, my two assistants and me. We have had a dinner and a tea or two and have begun tennis. Fortunately, we

have a tennis court in Baber and will have one shortly at Jabal-us-Siraj. In the evening we play bridge. That and an occasional ride are about all of it. I've a new pony from Turkestan, and he's a bit fresh; keeps me busy when I'm on him, waltzes around on his hind legs whenever he passes a vehicle of any sort.

I've been waiting here thirty-four days to see His Majesty. Haven't seen him since last October. An audience was granted today, and I was with him about two hours and a half, getting through about 1 percent of what I had stored up for him. His Majesty was very gracious, shook hands, and presented me with a cigarette from the royal case. After he finished the day's work, I was given tiffin, and he very kindly sent me dishes from his own table five times — game, asparagus, fresh strawberries, mulberries, and, what I like most, mangoes from India. They must have been the first of the season.

I had some fun with my beard. Scarcely anyone knew me, and when they told His Majesty, he came to look at me through the glass door. He asked me if I were going to take it off. I told him I was, and he said, "When I come to Jabal-us-Siraj you will have grown another because you will be so busy you won't have time to shave." Bar a week's surveying, I haven't done a tap for over six months. His Majesty has promised me six hundred sappers and miners and has dictated a lot of orders which I shall get the translation of tomorrow, so that I can make comments on them.

This is Tuesday. On Saturday I shall see him again. He explained that on Thursday he took a holiday, and Friday, of course, is a day of prayer. In three weeks' time we can start work. H.M. says that there is plenty of it too. There are eleven hundred tons of plant in Peshawar now, some of it in pretty bad shape, having been jammed into the sarai any old way. Orders were given for elephants and carts, and I got an order for a European to be employed at Peshawar to look

after the stuff, as the agent there does not understand how to take care of it. You see, all of this work is new to the country and people, and we have to learn a bit from experience. May your honor ever increase, and may you never be tired!

Baber Sarai, 26 June 1912

Tomorrow is mail day. I sent a letter in your care some months ago. Did it arrive? Should have, for it passed Peshawar. I have had two audiences with His Majesty this month, and he graciously ordered me to come before him tomorrow. I've had khubber (news) that the date is to be postponed till Saturday, but unless I get word early tomorrow, I shall go to the palace. His Majesty has had a touch of gout, and the last time I saw him he was in dressing gown and pajamas. I hope that he will be better soon.

The Khost rebellion is finished and His Majesty's troops are returning. A lot of conscripts — not the regular uniformed troops — passed through this morning, and as they halted just outside the Baber Sarai, I took some pictures and developed a few which I shall send. When the Kohistani contingent came along, my Kohistani friends lined up the men for me, so I got some very interesting ones. Am also enclosing a few pictures of the Europeans up here. Handsome lot?

Once when His Majesty came to Jabal-us-Siraj to see the work, a delegation from the Khost camped on the road, intending to stop him and insist that he hear their petitions when he returned in his car to Kabul. As it happened, the Amir had become slightly ill, and had sent his car to Kabul to bring out a doctor. The delegation, supposing the Amir to be in the car when it came along, lined up across the road to block its passage. They stood in a row with pots of fire on their heads to signify that they were literally on fire — desperate. The occupants of the car were frightened, and the driver slowed down. He could not get through without running over them, but he ran so close that when the car stop-

ped, it was right abreast of the men and they broke their formation a little. Then, throwing in his clutch suddenly, he got through them before they could do anything to stop him. This, of course, was reported, and they never got to see the Amir.

When rebellion broke out in the Khost district, I gathered the cause was that the governor of the district, a relative of the Amir, had taxed and robbed the people till they could endure it no longer. They sent delegations and petitions to the Amir, but he took no notice of them. Most of the men sent against them were irregulars recruited from the Kohistan district. It was reported that His Majesty did not send regular troops because he feared they might join the rebels.

Nadir Shah Khan was given command, and succeeded in bringing them into submission. When he returned he was honored by the Amir and given the title of commander in chief of the army. This is the general who later led the Afghan troops against the British.

While the fighting was in progress there were all sorts of rumors flying about Kabul. One day I was told that six yabuloads of the heads of some of the rebel chiefs had arrived, sent in by the general, and there were others, all equally untrue.

The Kohistani troops were a wild-looking lot, armed with about every sort of weapon in the shape of a gun that one could imagine, and wearing a variety of foot gear and many different styles of trousers. Their only vestige of uniform was the sarkari cap, and one old chap had his lungi tied around that.

Among the recruits were some old graybeards, who in spite of their years were a hardy lot and could do long marches. A few slabs of nan tied in their kamarbands suffice them for days; given water they need nothing else. There were two who had old flintlock jezails with long brass-bound barrels and curved stocks. Another had an old flintlock of

still another type, and some were armed with old type, single-shot breech-loading British rifles. It is not unusual to run across old English tower muskets. A gun is a gun in Afghanistan even if it dates back to the days of the three musketeers. The people in remote districts will not trade one of their old muzzle-loading flintlocks for a modern breech-loader, for they can use country-made powder and bullets, while cartridges are hard to get and are, moreover, very expensive.

I talked with some of the men I knew, and they reported that it was poor game. The rebels were a poor lot. They were hardly decently clothed, and there was nothing to loot—an altogether uninteresting military affair. They related that the men's trousers only came to their knees. This is considered indecent by the Afghans. One can imagine that the natives of the Khost must have been very poorly dressed indeed to attract criticism from the irregulars.

Abdur Rahman, the Durani Chief

COMING through the Lion's Gate to the Ark, one sees the domed mausoleum of Abdur Rahman, ruthless Amir of Afghanistan (1880-1901). Directly under the dome in a bare and spacious sanctuary stands his tomb of variegated marble, with a large open Koran on display nearby.

Abdur Rahman consolidated Afghanistan and exiled to India a good many families who were inimical to his house, though the present Amir, Habibullah Khan, has allowed many of these, mostly the second generation, to return to Kabul. He fined the districts in which robberies were committed so heavily that robbery did not pay. When robbers were apprehended, he punished with death, and it was generally not an easy death. Consequently, it became safe for a lone man, providing he was an Afghan, to travel the roads without fear of being molested. Abdur Rahman believed that there would be no disorder in the country for thirty years following his death.

The condition in which he found his country is explained by the Amir himself: "Every priest, mullah and chief of every tribe and village considered himself an independent king. . . . The Mirs of Turkestan, the Mirs of Hazara, the chiefs of Ghilzai were all stronger than the Amir, and so long as they were rulers the kings could not do justice in the country. The tyranny and cruelty of the men were unbearable . . . every official, prince, nay, the king himself, had parties of assassins and a large number of hired robbers and thieves, and as the robbers used to kill travelers and other rich merchants of the country and plunder their property and money, the stolen property was divided between the employers and

the employed. . . . the first thing I had to do was to put an end to these numberless robbers, thieves, false prophets, and trumpery kings. I must confess that it was not an easy task, and it took fifteen years of fighting before they finally submitted to my rule or left the country, either by being exiled, or by departing to the next world."*

Possibly too much has been made of the judgment of Solomon. Abdur Rahman was hard and cruel; he killed many of his subjects. The Afghans boast today of the number he put to death, for he was a man whom they feared and respected — and Afghans respect nothing they do not fear.

Abdur Rahman ruled with a rod of iron; if he thought a man had become dangerous, he had him executed or assassinated, and confiscated his property to the crown. It is told of him that he sent for and hired an assassin to kill a man who was too powerful to have executed openly. The commission was carried out. A few days later, after thinking over the matter, the Amir had the man put to death, concluding that if he could be hired so easily, might not someone hire him to kill his king?

Once Abdur Rahman went for an outing to Paghman in the foothills not far from Kabul, where he often retired to rest. While he was sitting under a shamianah surrounded by his court, an old man who attempted to approach him with a petition was driven away by the guard. But the Amir saw, ordered that the man be permitted to come to him, and read the paper.

The petition set forth that the police of the district oppressed the people, that when they desired a man's wife or daughter they took her and killed anyone who objected; further, that if they wanted a house or a piece of land they seized it by force. After reading the paper through, the Amir ordered that the police be sent for. A little later his courtiers informed him that twenty-seven of them had arrived. He

*Translated by Dr. Abdul Ghani, Lahore, India.

asked, "Are they all here now?" But some few living farther away had not had time to get there, so he waited for them to appear. The Amir then inquired, "Is that all of them?" When told that it was (there were thirty of them) he said, "Very good, take them away and hang the lot," and turning to the old man added, "You stay here and see it done."

A young married woman appeared before him in durbar with a request to be divorced because her husband was an old man. The burden of her complaint was that he was toothless. The Amir listened and decided that the matter could be easily remedied. After sending for a blacksmith and his tools, he ordered him to take his pincers and pull out all the woman's teeth. Screaming and struggling she was held down on the ground while the deed was done. As soon as it was finished, the Amir told her, "Now you have no cause for complaint. You may go with your husband."

One day Abdur Rahman asked a European in charge of the workshops if he had any bad characters employed there. The man mentioned half a dozen, and was horrified to learn a few days later that they had all had their throats cut by order of the Amir. An English engineer in the Amir's employ whose construction work was being held up for the lack of machinery, which had been delayed in transit, decided to ride down the road to see if he could locate it. He found the machinery unloaded in the sarai of a malik at some distance from Kabul, where it had lain for some time. The malik became so impertinent when he was berated for causing the delay that the Englishman gave him a thrashing with his riding whip. The Afghans who were with the engineer told him that the malik was a big man and that he would complain immediately to the Amir. But the engineer reached the Amir first with his explanation of the affair. He was none too soon, for the Afghan appeared before the Amir, complaining that the Englishman had given him a terrible beating. "He struck me a hundred times!" The Amir interrupted, saying,

"Are you sure he struck you as many as a hundred times?" The man swore by his eyes that he had. The Amir replied, "Very good, you pay me one hundred rupees for every time he struck. Go!"

In his later years when he was unable to get about much on account of his gout, Abdur Rahman surrounded himself with spies, read their reports, and worked far into the night. It was during his time that the machine shops and gun factory were built. He had many schemes for the improvement of his country, writing in his autobiography that he hoped railroads could be introduced at some future time when Afghanistan had arrived at a state where it was able to protect itself from aggression. Though accepting an annual subsidy from the British, Abdur Rahman with a determined will held Afghanistan in complete isolation, upholding the age-old legend of the forbidden kingdom.

In the Service of His Majesty

Jabal-us-Siraj, 9 August 1912

TO GO back a little: after waiting two and one-half months in Kabul for a couple of interviews with His Majesty (and another that did not come off; you see, H.M. had a slight attack of the gout and severe indisposition, so he could do no work—this was unfortunate, but the will of Allah), finally, His Majesty issued written orders. I left for here on the thirteenth of July with 516 "suffering" miners, including 122 officers. The officers consist of a commandant, six kaptans, fifteen subadars, two majors, two surgeons, twelve kot hawalahdars, eight havildars. The "commidant" gets seventy Kabuli rupees per month, the kaptans thirty, the subadars twenty-five, and the havildars fourteen (divide by six for dollars). The others I do not remember. The surgeons, by the way, are not in the least medical. I think the title is copied from somewhere. The subadars are about like first lieutenants and the havildars are between sergeants and corporals. The kot hawalahdars are policemen of a sort. There is rather an excess of minor officers, due, I believe, to the fact that there has been much desertion from the ranks. Beside sappers and miners, there are three masahatis headed by two commidants, six gilkars, six ahangars, and five najjars; in other words, the usual surveyors, masons, blacksmiths, and carpenters. Our transport consisted of two elephants, one hundred and twenty-five camels and numerous yabus. We were four days on the road and rested three days after arrival to give the men a chance to go into camp and get settled.

I started my men on an eight-hour day. They protested that they had worked only four hours for the Amir. When I

told them they must give me written authority for that statement, an old firman was produced, signed by the Amir, giving their working hours as eight for certain months, seven for others, and six for the short winter days.

They told me that they were supposed to work seven hours at that season. But I was now learning to read my Persian calendar and found they had started the seven-hour day a month too soon. I told them they were to go back to eight hours and, moreover, they must make up for lost time. This caused a very funny strike. The first day we went back to the eight-hour schedule, when the trumpeters blew for quitting time no one looked up; everyone kept right on working. When I asked the officers what this meant, they all looked blank and professed not to know. I called my head man, the sarishtadar, to press the inquiry. The men said that if they had to work eight hours they might just as well keep right on working and never stop. The ringleaders were thrashed and the strike was called off. Of course, the officers were in it too, but it is not usual to thrash them — though it has been done.

We have been working three weeks today and have moved about eight thousand yards of earth at four cents per yard. Can you beat that? We start work at five and work till one. I give the men twenty minutes at nine-thirty for nan. 'Tis foolish to make men work eight hours on empty stomachs. I get up at a quarter to five, take the commidant with me, and count the men. He can count all right with the assistance of the majors. The final additions are a little difficult, but after two or three times we get it the same. One morning, the commidant and the one-eyed major had one more man than I did. They insisted, so I said, "We will check them again." This was unexpected. On second count, there were thirty-four men short which led to a court of inquiry and was rather a nuisance to the officers. Since then, my count goes.

I account for the lot every morning for obvious reasons. Sometimes I like to check them in the middle of the day. Unless I did it personally, there would always be a full corps on paper. You see, if a man does not want to work, all he has to do is to "come across" to any of the officers without exception. After work is started, I count the cooks (fifty), then visit the sick lines with bandages and a thermometer in one hand and a stick in the other. There are from forty to sixty daily, most of them malingering. I suggested sending some half-dozen under guard to Kabul to have their cases diagnosed, and they have decided to work. This keeps the list down, but they take turns and there will be a new lot every day.

Yesterday, I had a guard brought up for threatening to beat the hakim if he did not give him a "sick certificate." The commidant knocked him down and booted him a couple of times. Another man was given leg irons for fighting his subadar. We average about a thrashing a day for insubordination and the blacksmith puts bracelets on their ankles —riveted. We are gradually getting something like order and discipline, and the commidant and majors are learning to count.

Out of 516 men, we manage to keep about 380 at work, including officers. Some of the men work very well when they are watched. Sometimes I tell my tarjuman something like this, "My compliments to Captain Ali Mohammad down at the lower end, and if I see him sitting down again, I'll come down there and fan him with my wand personally." They know I am a man of my word.

We have only one tarjuman, Abdul Ghafoor Khan, to look after the laborers and work. Fortunately, he has a pretty fair understanding of English. One day this week while they were excavating on the powerhouse site, an order to remove the earth was given in slang and idiom. I heard him say, "Excuse me, I know Persian, Hindustani and English—I do not know the American."

Every day brings more patients for medical attention. I have just healed a poisoned sore on a man's hand, which had a turquoise ring on it and a dried root of some sort, and also a bad foot with a charm tied to the big toe. I'm tending about a half-dozen cases, two sore arms, one leg, four sore eyes.

One patient, called the pahlavan or fighting man, is a giant and splendidly built. I have been trying to physic him for three days—gave him a triple dose last night. In the meantime, having used up yards of bandages and all my antiseptics and such, I had to put in a requisition for some medical supplies. Inshallah, they will come.

One of my carpenters, after cutting a deep gash in his hand between the thumb and forefinger with an adze, went to a cask and filled the cut with cement. When my attention was called to it, I had him wash the cement off. A little later he went to the blacksmith, got some borax, and filled the cut with that. "But what could he put on it?" the old blacksmith asked while I was telling them what kind of fools some people were. I answered that he might have tried spitting on it. The old man said, "True words, true words!" There was no more delay; I dressed the cut.

The country doctors, or local hakims, use herbs and a few homemade drugs, but most of their treatment is hocus-pocus. There are two with the regiment, and I have one so he can read a thermometer sometimes. This old chap carries a small tin box divided off into four compartments, containing white, red, yellow, and blue salve. It is all the same grease, colored differently. The red is composed of beef fat with rose leaves boiled in it, and the blue is from indigo, I think; the others I do not know. Some patients prefer one color and some another. Painting a sore toe with indigo is a common remedy.

Cow dung is used for poulticing, although one man came to me with his hand done up in pigeon droppings. Around a sore foot or hand they also tie blue beads, all the turquoise

rings they can borrow, bits of wood from the lintel of the door to a holy tomb, and pages from the Koran obtained from a mullah. When all these charms and the local hakim fail to improve the infected hand or foot, they generally come to me. Most cuts are tied in bits torn from turbans or kamarbands. I have performed miracles with a little hot water and soap with bichloride as a disinfectant.

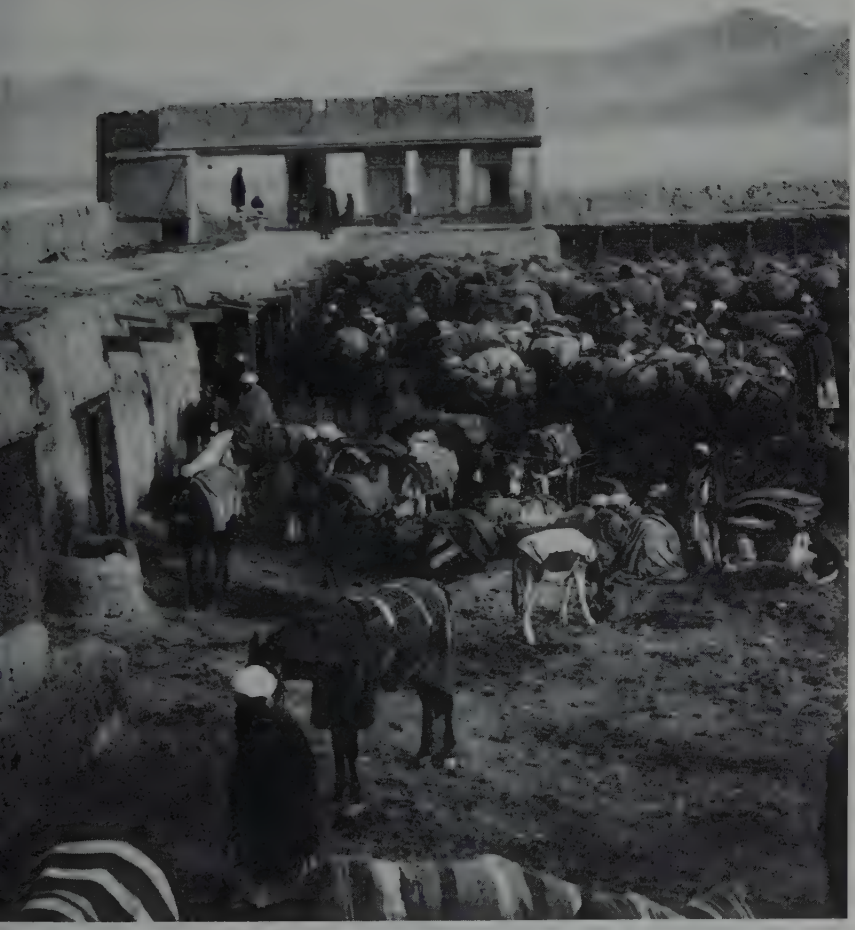
Patients have come fifty miles to me and gone away very much disappointed because I would not give them dawa for their ailments. I did not know what was the matter with them and dared not give them anything. They thought it was because I did not want to bother. One man brought me his twelve-year-old son whose leg was broken. The bones protruded and the leg was all raw and inflamed. I asked the man how long it had been since the accident happened, and he told me three months. A broken limb or any kind of serious accident generally means death to them. Kismet, the will of Allah.

I am going to get an elephant tomorrow to shift some big stones. We can turn the river into our cutoff next week. There are four more days till Ruza, or the beginning of Ramazan, the month of fast. We shall work seven hours, for it is a hard month and hot. May you never be tired!

24 August 1912

For some time I have been pretty well occupied. Both my head man and the commidant have been on the sick list. Besides Crawford, I haven't a soul who knows straight up—not an officer I can trust to count the men, let alone work them. Three days ago I turned twenty-eight out of the sick list and weeded it down to thirty-three. Only one, who had fever, has returned. It is hard to tell sometimes when they are shamming.

We are just in the midst of Ruza, the fast. I'll be glad when it is over. This goes out tomorrow.



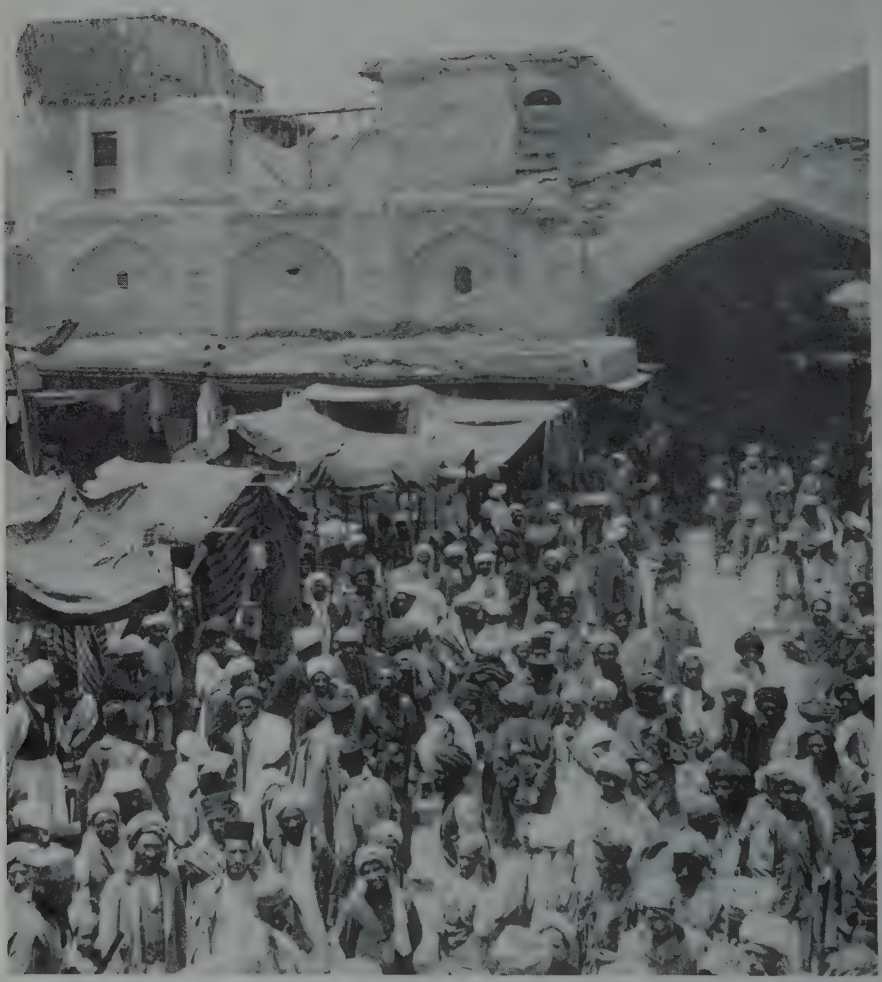
The sarai, or wayside stopping place, at Dakka.

A rice husking mill near Jalalabad.

A sugar cane crusher, with an underground bamboo pipe to carry the syrup into the house.

Preparing to go to India on leave.

Camp on the way to Kabul. The carriers are resting with their rifles stacked.



The entrance to the covered bazaar, the shopping district of Kabul.

A street of shops, located on the road to three passes leading to Russian Turkestan and Badakhshan.

A shop in the bazaar at Jabal-us-Siraj, with food, calico, and a few cheap trinkets for sale.

The sarai at Dakka, the meeting place for incoming and outgoing kafilas.

Kohistanis preparing a festival feast.

Unloading mulberry wood inside the old fort at Jabal-us-Siraj.

A native barber. For comfort he has removed his heavy Afghan shoes.

The powerhouse at Jabal-us-Siraj, with the new fort and the Haram Sarai in the background.

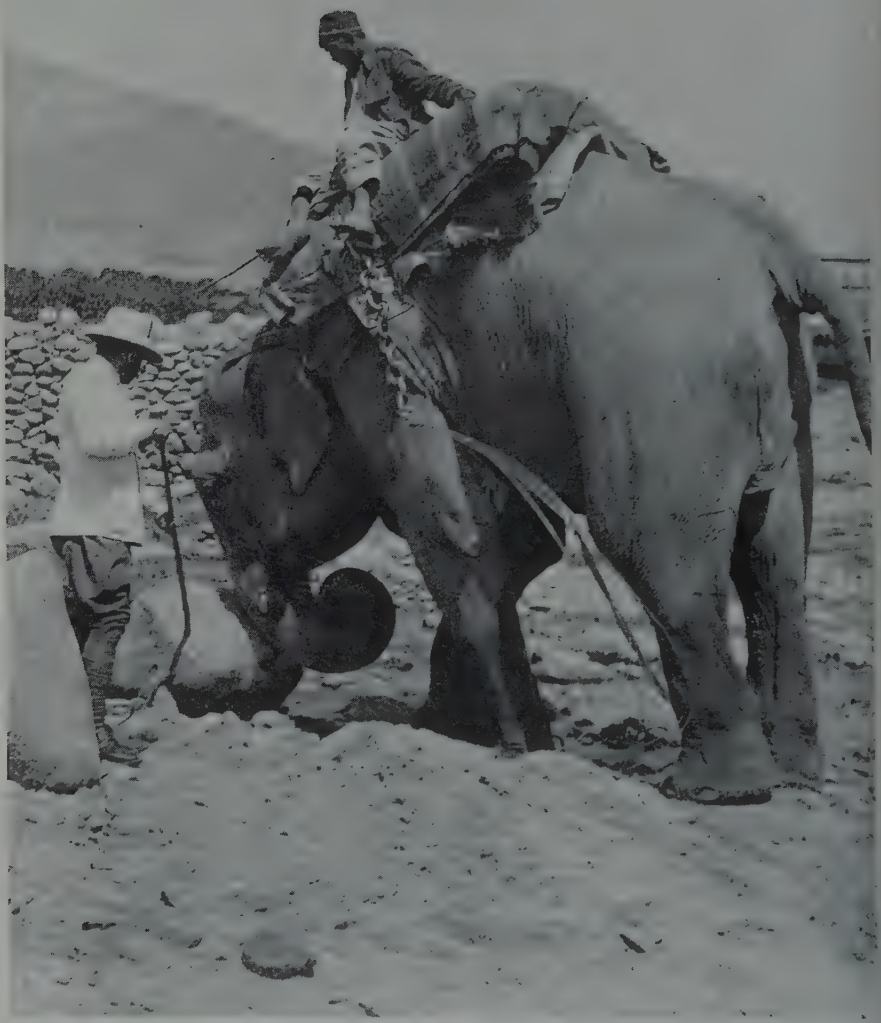
Elephants hauling machinery through the Khyber Pass.

The surveying crew.

Sappers and miners at roll call.

Kohistanis working above the dam. The armed guard seated ut the left keeps them from running away.

Electrical apparatus was brought from Peshawar, 250 miles away, by elephant carts. It took five and a half months.



Pari, the work elephant, moved boulders and helped to haul heavy machinery through the Khyber Pass from India.

he average output was one rivet per minute
r eight hours a day.

Camels carrying transmission wire and iron
for the steel towers.

Native bridge builders making repairs.

Celebrating the completion of the canal headworks.

A section of the power canal.

A crew of six erected two towers a day at a labor cost of forty-eight cents per tower.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 17 Ramazan 1330 A.H.
The Month of Fast—the Year of the Mouse

Be in good health! May you live long! After greetings—I was pleased by the receipt of your favor on the twelfth day of the last moon, as it was the only letter I received that week and there was no postage to pay. I'm going to answer it while the mood is with me.

This is Ruza, the Mohammedan lent. The fast, which lasts through the thirty days of the month of Ramazan, is about the worst thing that Mohammed wished on his followers. It rotates with the lunar year and comes about eleven days earlier every season. For the past few years it has arrived in July and August, the hottest and longest days of the year. From before daylight—according to the Book of Books, before a white thread can be distinguished from a black one in the fringe of a shawl—until after sunset, no Mussalman may drink, eat, or smoke, except if he is sick or on a long journey, or in the case of a woman, if she has a young child.

This means that on the hottest summer days men working in the fields have to go seventeen hours without water. There are extra and longer prayers, the Koran has to be read through during Ruza, and they have to get up at two o'clock to do their cooking in order to finish eating before daylight. It is very hard on the working classes. They are bilious and half-sick and ugly by the end of the month. There are always disorders resulting, and as their stomachs are all upset, there are more from the feasting and carousing which takes place after the fast is over.

The Afghans, with but few exceptions, observe this fast rigidly; even the sick will refuse medicine. Chillum addicts have the hardest time of it. I have seen one with the chillum ready and the stem in his hand, waiting for the signal gun which denotes that the fast may be broken. When the time came he could hardly steer the stem to his mouth for the shaking of his hand, and after a couple of long pulls toppled

over unconscious. The chillum came even before a drink of water.

The soldiery and mirzas are greatly addicted to this water pipe called a chillum, in which country tobacco is smoked and the smoke drawn through water before it is inhaled. Charas, which is Indian bhang or hemp, is smoked also, but those who use it to excess become imbecilic after a time. In fact, charas smokers are called charasis, much the same as one would say drunkards. Snuff is imported mostly from India, and many use it, plastering their mouths so full that when they speak they sound as if they were stuffed with cotton. Others eat opium, although the use of opium is not prevalent. Needless to say, there is no doubt but that one of the best things Mohammed did was to prohibit the use of alcohol.

Abdur Rahman is reported to have said that all officials whose titles began with the letter *m* were shaitans. This includes mustofis, maliks, mehmandars, mehtars, and assuredly mirzas or clerks. *Mirza* means "prince," and in the days when men with ability to write were scarce they were called princes. Today all writers are called mirzas although the title has lost its former meaning—so my head man tells me. The mirzas wield much power, for there are not many men who understand the magic of the written word. Many of them are secretaries for men in exalted positions who are unable to write their own names. In such a case documents are signed with a mohr, which is generally set in a ring. An official will carry a little box of ink fastened to his watch chain. When signing, he wets his finger, inks it, and then rubs it on the mohr. According to royal order, all mohrs must bear a date to show when they are made.

Over half of the letters of the Persian alphabet have dots either over or under them. If a mirza by any chance puts in a few dots, they will be either two or three letters before or behind where they belong. At times, they use a code of con-

ventional signs made up of the letters of the alphabet to indicate figures, so that if anyone has mastered the numerals he will still be unable to read the weights and amounts. Sometimes their letters and accounts are written so that they can be interpreted in at least three different ways.

The Amir told me a story of a mirza who was sent for to write a letter. The mirza returned word that he could not write the letter as he had a lame foot. A messenger was sent back with instructions to ask the mirza what he meant by sending such a fool excuse. He replied that it was quite true, he did not write with his feet, but no one could read his writing; therefore, whenever he wrote a letter it was necessary for him to go along to read it. And as he was lame and could not walk, it was useless for him to write.

Formerly the mirzas wrote on little slips of paper, all sizes and shapes. It was very easy for them to change or substitute when an investigation was made of their accounts. Amir Abdur Rahman ordered that books should be made with numbered pages and each page stamped with a government seal, so that substitutions could not be made. The hukm stated that the writing should be done in ink. I just got three of these books for my work, two hundred pages each, foolscap size, unruled. Cost about twenty cents. Here's a translation of the government notice written in Persian on the first page: "This book is numbered on pages by His Majesty's order and has been sealed with the seal of the Nishan. If one word is noticed to be erased or scraped off, the hand of the one who did it shall be cut off. It is correct." In another place it says that after a certain date loose leaves shall not be used for accounts, and all mistakes must have lines drawn through them and the corrections written above. This is a wise precaution and was needed.

I hear the brigadier of the sappers and miners is to be tried for subtracting thirty-five thousand rupees of the men's pay, and that this lot was sent up here to get a bad name. I

elected to see them paid; got and typed the rolls, sat in a chair for thirteen solid hours while the mirzas paid off, asked each man if his pay were right. There were numerous arguments and the men generally got more than was passed out first. When they tried to make a man take a bad rupee, I took it and gave him a good one out of my pocket; told them to give me all the bad ones and I would take them to His Majesty to get them redeemed. The bad ones came back in a stream after that, and I did not have to redeem them either. The men caught on quickly. The so-called system of accounts is weird and tortuous with intent. Not anyone but the mirzas can make anything of it. There has been no balance struck for years—it would be hopeless to try. Anyway the men got their pay all right, and now that they have it it will be hard to make them work as much as usual. Still, there are ways of accomplishing it, and I know a few.

They are supposed to work seven hours during Ruza. Certainly, that is too long to work in the hot sun without food and water, so I've cut it down to six hours on my own, telling the men they could work six—or loaf seven hours. However, we have just finished a 1700-foot cutoff for the river, and are now excavating for the powerhouse and tailrace. A great khan is said to have lived here years ago. We found an old millstone down about ten feet, an arrowhead that is either hard copper or brass, and have dug up a good number of old copper coins, some silver, and two gold, besides bits of jewelry. Many of the coins are apparently very old: my interpreter tells me that some are inscribed in Kufic and some in "Hebroni," or Hebrew. Maybe one of the mullahs can read the inscriptions. There is another language they speak of, "Turani"—I've no encyclopedia and am in deep waters. The coins all go to His Majesty. Many of these things, judging by the amount of loam over them, not river wash, must be pretty old, maybe hundreds of years.

I have one of the elephants dragging big stones out of the

river bed, rigged up in a harness of a few feet of chain and some wire. Pari (meaning "fairy") will walk off with a stone weighing half a ton as though it were a pebble. Furthermore, I have one man trained so that he can put a chain around a stone; he's an expert now. Pari and I are good friends, for I feed her sugar and scraps of my lunch. Her daily rations are as follows: 160 pounds of straw, 40 pounds of wheat flour, 2 pounds of crude sugar, 1½ pounds of drawn butter, ½ pound of salt, and 24 pounds of wood for cooking purposes.

There were 516 men with an officer of sorts to every three workmen. The workmen, sappers and miners, are not so bad as a rule, but their officers were a hopeless, uneducated group, who disregarded orders and did about as they pleased. Their chief duty was to act as lookouts to give word when I was coming. I have taken the stick from a noble captain and stuck it upright in the sand with his military cap on it to show him they were as useful as he was. It was a surprise to him, but that was all. The officers did no work, but I did make them stand up, and after I had broken about twenty chillums, they concluded that there was to be no chillum smoking on the job. They held meetings, and a little of it filtered through to me. I was informed, as a friend, that there might be an accident if I continued to be so hard on them. When I was told they would leave, they were informed that that was my desire. Most of them took leave and never came back. They were just a little better than useless.

The sappers and miners call themselves saffar miners; we call them suffering beggars. They are Hazaras for the most part, but there are also companies of Afghans. It is practically forced labor, although they are paid—when their wage is forthcoming at all—ten Kabuli rupees per month (one dollar and sixty cents). The organization is patterned after the British and is officered much the same. The work they do is mostly pick and shovel, road making, and blasting, using a churn drill and Kabul-made black powder. Their

commidant, a Baluchi paid twelve dollars a month, is utterly ignorant and worthless as far as management is concerned.

The Hazaras are Mongolian and the best workmen. On the whole they are not afflicted with hookworm disease to the same extent as the others, and seem to be more intelligent—that is the Mongolian in them. They have no beards as a rule and look like Chinese. Of course, they are all good Mussalmans, belonging as the Kizilbashes do to the Shiah sect of the faith. *Hezar* means "a thousand." When Ghenghis Khan invaded the country in the twelfth century, he planted garrisons of a thousand men each, at different points. The Hazaras are descendants of these. They are stubborn people and good fighters. My superintendent told me that he bought two. The Amir was so enraged with them for giving him so much trouble that he sold them for forty rupees apiece.

Most of the mehtars, who care for horses in Kabul, are Hazaras. Some hold government positions and many act as servants for the Afghans. The women are taken into harams or used as house servants, but today they are not treated as slaves and seem to have nearly the same status as Afghans who intermarry with them. According to law, children born of concubines or slave girls have just the same rights as those born of legal wives, but if there is a fight or a hearing in the Amir's durbar, the Afghan always gets the best of it.

Afghans, when they mention Ghenghis Khan, always say that he was a shaitan, very cruel and strong. They tell how he killed man, woman, and child. "He would not even leave a mouse alive and would kill the very birds when he caught them. He was born with blood on his hands, which was an omen of his bloody character."

There is a Habibullah College in Kabul.* The teachers are Hindustani Mussalmans who have been through the English schools in India, but the Amir has to bribe boys to go to school and there is very little discipline. After they graduate

*Habeebiya or Habibia College. (Editor's note.)

(?) they are asked whether they wish to be doctors or engineers, and then begin their professional careers by being paid seventy rupees a month. It is optional with them whether they do any work or not. Of course, they are all above working. They know a few things by heart and can parrot them off; practical knowledge they have none. A grammar-school boy could put them to shame in any branch of learning. Still, it is a start. Some one told me they have an English book, *Secrets of the English Court,* and are reading it in school. (Not just the sort of literature one would select for young Afghans!) Those who can read prefer English novels. They must have some curious interpretations of some of the rubbish they get.

His Majesty sent me twenty educated young sons of gentlemen to serve as apprentices on the electric work. I asked for boys who had been educated in the schools. His Majesty frowned, hesitated, and then said briefly, "We haven't got." However, my students can all read and write and know a little mathematics. They are supposed to be from sixteen to eighteen years old, but some must be at least forty although they shave and try to disguise their ages. One of them, after I had expelled him, grew a beard that was quite grey, and adopted the profession of faqir. They all came to me dressed in frock coats and equipped with fountain pens, but I run my school something on the lines of "Dotheboys Hall" and they soon discarded the coats. They add to my labors. The surveyors are students also, and we have to correct their work—at present the commidant is struggling with subtraction.

By any standard these so-called sons of gentlemen are certainly a hard lot. One nearly put out another's eye with a stone. Some have been thrashed and others put in irons, but most of them are getting worse instead of better and they play truant half the time. (It is difficult to understand the complexities of the Afghan character, yet I believe the

Afghans understand their own people. They consider mild discipline the act of a fool—to be taken advantage of. They understand only force, yet seek revenge for any act of violence. As a result they have to be thrashed like very bad, incorrigible children.) I have told my head man that I do not have time to spend on them if they do not improve, and will report them to the Amir. This disturbs them a little, but not much, for adverse reports are seldom made to His Majesty. If they ever learn enough to realize how little they now know, they will have learned something.

With little talent for quick thinking (unless in connection with some deviltry) and no power of concentration, they absorb knowledge only by constant repetition and forget more quickly than they learn. If one of the twenty can do a problem in mathematics, the rest copy. One day we gave out different lessons; the answers returned were all alike. About the only spur to achievement is to work on their vanity, and although there is not much time to spend on them we have tried to see what they can learn. With much labor, Crawford and I have piloted them through the multiplication table until we can now say it backwards and upside down in Persian. For three weeks they were idling their time and making slow progress, then my sarishtadar suggested putting those who were backward and lazy to work carrying earth and stones in zambils, the four-handled willow baskets used by the common workmen. That was four days ago. They did not like it and would walk along repeating "seven times six is chihil u du." I have had nine graduates since.

None of the plant has reached Kabul yet, but I hear there is some on the way. Inshallah, it will come sometime. When we started work this year it was just eight months less one week since we left off last fall—no orders had been given. I mentioned it to His Majesty, and he said things happened that way sometimes, but he was going to give me good help this year, and he knew I was thinking things were bad last

year. Perhaps the Khost rebellion in the south interfered a bit with our getting men. While Crawford, a capable American engineer, has been with me since July, the other assistant has been absolutely idle in Kabul for four months. No order has been given about him—just overlooked. Of course I have written, but my letters have not passed the barriers yet. I rather expect His Majesty up here after Ramazan. He is fond of sports, and has become very keen about golf recently, even arranging his prayers so that they do not interfere. We shall have something to show His Majesty when he comes this time. May you not be tired!

The Better Moon

Jabal-us-Siraj, 30 Ramazan 1330 A.H.

MAY you be in good health!

"One evening at the close of Ramazan ere the better moon arose." Do you know your Omar? This is the last day, and they will all be out looking for the moon of deliverance, as soon as it can be seen this evening. There will be feasting for three days, the Id, the great festival.

After the fast everyone dresses in his best clothes; if he has only one suit he washes it clean for the occasion. Friends meeting after the close of the fast embrace and exchange blessings, saying, "Mubarak bashi!" Then follows the Festival of Fast Breaking. In Kabul great crowds of tribesmen gather from far and near. Finally there is a procession to the masjid, the great mosque, where the faithful give their prayers in the Amir's presence. Id-i-Qurban, or Bakra Id, comes six weeks after Ruza, another festival for the Afghans. Cows and goats (goats in Afghanistan) are sacrificed, and there is great feasting and display of fine clothes.

I'm going to get a picture of them praying tomorrow. There will be about three thousand in all. Which reminds me—I kept eight men, a captain, and the commidant and made them work one hour overtime yesterday for starting in with prayers after the bugle. This is a regular game with them. God is always on their lips and in their hearts. One would think they were the most truthful, sincere people on the face of the earth!

A Mussalman prays five times a day, facing always toward Mecca. Some of the gentry even carry little compasses on their watch chains to aid them when they are out in the

country away from a masjid. The first prayer is before daylight. The muezzin calls out that prayer is better than sleep. (This—on cold mornings in winter when their ablutions have to be made with ice water!) The second prayer is any time for an hour or so after noon. Two more come in the early evening, and the fifth in the first watch of the night. He prays where he happens to be when the time comes.

I have seen the Amir pray on the ground by the roadside, all his followers joining in prayer just behind him. Even the man who cares for the horses kicks off his shoes and lines up with the rest, praying with his king. "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is His prophet!" If a Mussalman says his prayers, he can commit most crimes and still wiggle into heaven—hell being reserved for Christians and butparasts.

Afghans have held fast to the pure doctrine of Mohammed, as taught to them by their mullahs. Social ways and customs have been molded by Muslim culture, and they represent a rigid barrier against western ideas which interfere with traditions based on the Islamic code. The Afghans are Sunni Mussalmans, with the exception of the Hazaras and Kizilbashes who are Shiahs or Shiites. I have never heard of any friction between the two sects in Afghanistan, but often in India there is—especially during the celebration of Muharram. The police are out in force, and the processions of the different sects are made to take separate routes. Otherwise there would be, and have been, bloody riots and killings.

Afghans are superstitious and believe in many signs and omens. Astrologers can work their will with them. They believe in jinns and shaitans and will swallow whole some absurd tale which relates to the supernatural. Sometimes when I have torn up notes and thrown them on the ground, I have noticed that some of my men picked them up and tucked them away in the crevice of a rock or under a stone. On asking the reason for this, I was informed that the bits of paper "might have the name of God written on them, and it is not

good to step on them." Even a blank scrap of paper is protected and never used for unclean purposes because it could be inscribed with the name of God—the Koran was written on paper.

I have a very good man in charge of the work this year, one of His Majesty's ghulam bachas. The literal translation is "slave boy," but some of the courtiers are beginning to shy at this term and call themselves page boys. "Lord of the Bed Chamber" or "Gold Stick in Waiting" might be better. So far M'd Akram Khan, the sarishtadar, is doing well, and everything is moving along faster than I expected. There has been no word from my assistant in Kabul since we left, but I gather that he wrote, and his letter may have gone to Peshawar. I have written again through M'd Akram Khan about getting him here.

And unfortunately I'm sending my khansaman away. I'm sorry, for he was quite reliable for a year. But there is no question about it; he has been going from bad to worse. I told him to stop talking today, and he squared off at me. I don't want any trouble because he is most too old—gave him twenty minutes to pack and clear the premises under guard. Crawford's cook is going too. Little surprise party for them, I think, for they have 250 miles to travel to get back to India. I have written to see that they are not allowed in Baber. In the meantime, Boy is doing the cooking. It's just one damned thing after another.

I'm enclosing some pages that I wrote recently. Please forward a copy to the addresses enclosed, with an accompanying note to explain that it is for reading purposes *only*, and must be returned to you.

His Majesty is expected up here shortly; I shall be glad to see him. I may go to India for two months' leave in December. Shall visit friends and may go hunting again—inshallah.

I was interrupted and had to count two months' pay—a time-taking job. Now it is time to look for the "better moon." May you not be tired!

The Way of a King at the Kabul Court

Jabal-us-Siraj, 1 November 1912
The Year of the Mouse

HIS Majesty sent word by the Esteemed Mustofi-al-Mamalik last week that thirty carts of electric plant had arrived in Kabul, and that I was to send one of my assistants in to find out where it was to go, or come in myself. The mustofi would bring whoever came in his car and send him back the next day. I concluded to go myself. The Esteemed was to take me to his home.

We got away about eleven o'clock and stopped for tiffin at a malik's, an old friend of mine, Mohammad Azim Khan, who used to be a colonel in Lord Robert's time — very decent old chap. They were going to put me at a table on the veranda, but I proposed eating with the bunch — about thirty. They spread the tablecloth on the ground, and in accordance with an old custom seated me above the salt as the honored guest. Had a very good banquet.

I was supplied with a knife, fork, and spoon. The rest, of course, ate with their right hands, and pushed the food into their mouths with their thumbs. As the left hand is used for meaner purposes, food is never touched with it. Among the gentry a ewer and basin were passed around by a servant, who poured water on their right hands only as a rule. When they finished eating the basin was passed around again, and they filled their mouths with water and rinsed them out, using one of their fingers for cleansing. This looked rather unpleasant, but had the advantage of cleanliness.

After the tablecloth was spread on the ground, the servant came with an armful of nan, kicked off his shoes, and walked down the center of the cloth leaving a piece at each place —

and so with the other dishes. He seemed to walk on the cloth by preference. We had all the common foods: pilau, kabob, vegetables, and curds, with slabs of nan for plates. After the meal tea was served. The scraps and remains were left on the cloth, which was rolled up, carried out, and unrolled again so that the servants and hangers-on might eat also. On a hot day these tablecloths have quite a perceptible odor, for they are seldom washed. This is speaking for the gentry only; the common people have no cloths, few dishes except cooking pots, and not too many of those.

We stopped for prayers on the way a couple of times and occasionally had to wait for a train of camels to get off the road. Mr. Shutur looks on a motorcar with suspicion and performs some curious gambols. Several times we had to stop on account of veiled ladies traveling on camels and donkeys. You should see the general scramble to get off the road when a motorcar looms up. You see, His Majesty might be in it, and if he were held up there would be ructions. When we arrived in Kabul at six o'clock, I got away from the Esteemed and went home to Baber with Miller to spend the night with him. Next morning I sorted the material that had arrived. This is the first that has come through. There were twenty-one carts with a varied assortment—in pretty bad shape and nothing that was wanted now.

Miller has his troubles too. At dinner that night he admitted that he plays golf, or rather coaches the Amir's game every day. When they were on the links, His Majesty said, "Mr. Jewett has come. He is to check over some goods which have arrived."

Miller told H.M. that he had seen some old coins I had for him—some gold, some silver, and some copper, about fifty in all, which were dug up where we were excavating.

"But I cannot see him until after I return from Jalalabad," His Majesty replied. "I'm too busy now having durbar-i-bandi every day." There are twelve hundred prisoners to try

and he does one hundred a day. The day before he had one woman sentenced to have her eyes put out. She was a confirmed thief, I believe.

The Afghan laws are Islamic sacred laws, tribal laws, and those of the Amir. The Amir is the last court of appeal and is a law unto himself. He can always find an interpretation of the law which will let him work his will. That is to say, his will is law. There are other courts and men appointed to try cases, but anything serious and all capital cases have to be passed on by the Amir.

The fana is used to extort confessions. A large stake is split, and the bottoms are fastened together and driven into the ground. Then the prisoner's foot is bound tightly to the stake. The fana, inserted at the top of the stake, is driven down, and this tightens the cords and pulls them into the flesh. If the prisoner does not confess the wedge is driven farther. The torture generally brings confession whether the man is guilty or not, though some have endured it and kept silence—losing their toes afterwards.

"The pain would make any man confess," I suggested to the Amir one day when he was explaining the fana to me.

"That is quite true," His Majesty admitted, "but we have always noticed that a guilty man confesses sooner than one who is innocent."

Although an Afghan policeman who witnesses a torture for the first time may get sick, he soon becomes used to it and is probably ashamed of having shown any feeling. An Afghan is not very kind of heart, except maybe where his own child is concerned—if it be a boy, and of tender years.

Ordinary prisoners wear leg irons, iron bands around their ankles with straight rods from each reaching to their waists, where they are fastened by a string or the man's kamarband. Thus supported the prisoners can walk without much trouble, but would not be able to run.

Many of them work in the shops, or loaf there. The gen-

eral in charge has declared he would rather not have them, as they do not work enough to pay for the trouble of watching them. Desperate characters are, of course, heavily ironed and condemned to death.

The criminal laws are severe, but the Amir does not practice the cruelties his father did. He does not have people thrown into boiling vats, torn apart, skinned alive, starved to death, or maimed. Though he does some cruel things, he is letting a good many off. According to Afghan standards he is too lenient. I have heard Afghans complain that he put only about twenty to death each year, whereas Abdur Rahman killed thousands. When murders are committed and cattle stolen, the government does nothing about it. Furthermore, some prisoners remain in jail for years awaiting trial, only to be freed as innocent when finally brought before H.M.—but are given no compensation for the time they have been in confinement.

During the times when His Majesty sits in durbar-i-bandi for several days, he tries prisoners from nine to three, so that it does not interfere with his photography, golf, and other amusements.

His Majesty is very keen about golf and plays a good game. He is leaving for Jalalabad today to be gone a week and Miller is going, too, to lay out a golf course. Miller's work—putting in a big dam at Ghazni, a waterworks, and the woolen mills for Kabul—keeps him very busy, but all the same he has to look after his golf lately. He has a new set of golf clubs, made in Kabul, with his name on them—a present from the Amir.

When the Amir was in India, among the many modern conveniences he saw, remembered, and introduced into his own country were milestones along the roads. It is twenty-six krohs from Kabul to Jabal-us-Siraj. There are kroh-stones (like milestones) all the way. Thereby hangs a tale. His Majesty had marble kroh-stones made with the distances

from Kabul to Jabal-us-Siraj cut into the stone. The lettering was leaded to make it plain. As lead is used for making bullets, the lead in these stones was promptly utilized for that purpose. Then the budmashes broke off some of the stones and carried them away. This was pure vandalism. When His Majesty heard about it, he sent for the mustofi, chancellor of the exchequer, who is also Malik-al-Mamalik, Chief Malik of the Maliks of Kohistan, and ordered him to have guardhouses built at the kroh-stones and to place two guards supplied with rifles at each. The cost of the huts and other expenses were to be apportioned among the maliks of the districts through which the road passed.

I happened to be traveling with the mustofi when he went from Kabul up into Kohistan to see that these orders were carried out, and stopped one night with him at the house of a local malik. There were gathered together twelve or fourteen other maliks to whom the mustofi gave orders and detailed instructions for the building and equipping of the guardhouses. There was much argument about the apportioning of the work and expense, which went on well into the night. These cone-shaped huts, built of mud, went down with the first rains, and were rebuilt on the same plan. The third time they were made square, with flat mud roofs supported by poles which were laid across the tops of the walls. The new kroh-stones were made of heavy iron plate set well into the ground. What is the use of milestones for those who cannot read? I have been over this road with the kotwal, the chief of police of Kohistan, and have been asked the distances by him because he cannot even read the figures.

I returned from Kabul the next day. When I went to the upper canal yesterday after going over the work at the powerhouse, I found three men tied to a tree. They had attempted to run away to Turkestan and were caught. One got clear. I have just had a call from my sarishtadar, and he tells me six more have bolted. If the ones who are caught

are taken before His Majesty they will certainly have their throats cut.

To illustrate how persistent some of these people are, the sarishtadar was just telling me that a thief was caught and taken before His Majesty. The first time he was let off; the second time, he had one hand cut off; the third time, the other hand was cut off. Even so, he had an iron hook made to fit over one of his stumps, and he kept on at his trade. It is bred in the bone, for some are sons of many generations of thieves. There is an old proverb that a Pathan mother, when a child is born to her, passes it through a hole in the wall saying, "Be a thief! Be a thief!"

I turned the water into the upper irrigation ditch last evening, so the people could do a little irrigating over Sunday (Friday). This has been enlarged to carry water for the lower ditch, which we are making into a power canal. I went out to inspect it this morning. His Highness, the naib-us-sultana, was up here day before yesterday. I did not see him as I was on the upper canal. He just motored out and stayed a few hours, expressed his approval of the work, and went away. He left a present of one thousand rupees for the sappers and miners—very generous of him. They will get some of it. His Highness is His Majesty's brother, in charge of the treasury and other things.

21 November 1912

On the eighteenth we received a yabu-load of letters, papers and magazines—five months' mail, which cost only five dollars, with fifty-four pieces that were mine. It was brought up to Kabul by a European and we sent for it from here. In this way we have the Balkan news up to the first of November. Beginning Tuesday, the nineteenth, there is a four-day holiday, the Bakra Id or large festival, which gives us a chance at the mail. The following letter is from James Miller.

Baber, Kabul, 17 September 1912

MY DEAR JEWETT:

I have been going to write to you for ages, but as you know my time has been fully occupied. For the last six weeks or so my hours have been from eight in the morning to seven in the evening. About a fortnight ago, my royal master got a pain in his left arm and golf has had a rest, but is to start again in four days' time.

You will have heard all about my new pup. After the pup came a gold pencil case, and almost every day brought a golf ball or a packet of sweets. Two days ago I was presented with five Kabuli sovereigns and a complete golfer's outfit, consisting of eight clubs and a carrying bag, each club with my name engraved in Persian as well as the nishan-i-dolat. I am no end proud. I was sent for again yesterday and was in the royal presence from ten in the morning to seven in the evening, when a great many things were discussed, including religion, bridge, and the extension to the Koti Setareh. My plans for the latter have been approved, and I have to get out quantities and commence the work in three days. Inshallah.

I am glad to learn you are making some progress with your work. You may shake hands with yourselves as being the only two who are doing anything. We have just struggled through a four days' holiday and have commenced the old routine of going out to look at work which might be done, but isn't.

About a fortnight ago, Azimoolah spread a report that my Ghazni dam had burst and destroyed all the fields and houses for miles down. This did not alarm me as I have no fear of its bursting even when it is finished, and a lot less when the foundations are not yet in. Yesterday a man came in from Ghazni with a letter for me and I got the truth out of him. It seems the brigadier had an iron door made in the workshops and closed up the opening in the old dam. When the

water rose to twenty feet it doubled up his door like a bit of paper, as well as knocking down a bit of the old wall, but no further damage was done. The brigadier proposed to bund up the old dam two years ago, but I advised him to do nothing so foolish, so he will see that the Inglis mardum have some sense after all.

H.M. is immensely pleased with the work that has been done, and is to start another dam in Khurd Kabul—so you may look for a shortage of sufferin' miners next year.

At present I am busy on a new golf links, five and one-half miles from Kabul and eight miles from Baber. A tumtum has been placed at my disposal and it will take about another ten days before the job is finished. His Majesty is going to Jalalabad in about a week's time just to see how things are looking, and is taking me with him to prepare a golf links there. After all this, you will be forced to admit that I am on the most important work in Afghanistan.

I expected to find my dak when I came home tonight, but alas! there are no signs of it, and goodness only knows when it may turn up. One gets used to disappointments, but I think missing a dak is the worst of the lot. The newspapers have not been coming at all regularly of late, but Kelly has copied out a whole lot of dope for you which I am enclosing. I wish you were both back again, for Baber—in spite of its advantages—is lonesome at times. How would you like a wee bit of my kutcha Persian to finish off with?

Yours sincerely,
MILLER

On the nineteenth, His Majesty motored out from Kabul and paid us a surprise visit. It had been thirteen months since he was here last. When the flag went up announcing his arrival, the four of us, Halliday, Crawford, Kelly, and I, walked over to the new fort to make our salaams. The Amir was sitting on the balcony of the new Haram Sarai, within its walls.

His Majesty shook hands and wanted to know if I had any pictures of crooked wood to show him like last time, and if the work was going better. I told him we had a little to show him this year. Then His Majesty informed us of Wilson's election as president of the United States, smiled, and said, "I suppose he is a blacksmith or carpenter." (The Amir has no use for republics, and according to his way of thinking he himself is one of the few real monarchs left in the world. Even the king of England, does not amount to much; he is dictated to by parliament and has practically nothing to do with the government.)

When His Majesty asked why I had not sent him the flashlight photo I took at the time of Jashn, I told him that it was because Miller's was a better one — that they were underexposed and I developed mine first; Miller saw it, developed his longer, and got a better picture. His Majesty laughed and quoted a Turkish saying, "The man who goes first is a bridge for the one who comes after."

We talked about the work a bit, and I got in an order for one hundred feet of chain and some screen for sand, which I had been writing about for three months. When His Majesty asked why, the head of public works said he did not know the length of chain — a good straight one! It is the custom! H.M. had not heard, and would see that I got them. When you have to go to the supreme head for things like this and he comes but once a year, 'tis a bit slow.

His Majesty gave orders for a marble railing around the stair well, telling me he designed this building as well as all others. Then he sent for some samples, and pulling a jewel-handled dagger out of his boot, tested the quality of the marble. H.M. knows all about everything! Presently he told us to eat, rest, and return in half an hour, which we did. Fennell, H.M.'s chauffeur, went with us and we got all the latest news and the votes in the presidential election, which he had noted down for us. I'd like to see a morning paper; the foreign telegrams are meager.

When we returned to the fort after lunch, we were told to go down to the powerhouse and wait till His Majesty had said prayers. His Majesty came down at two in his motor. He inspected the work and gave orders that the sappers and miners were to remain here until December 21, go to Jalalabad, and return on March 20. I arranged for my assistants to stay here this winter, and H.M. said that he would issue a firman for my leave after the work was finished in December. Two months' leave from Peshawar will just give me time to get back.

Then I gave His Majesty the coins, ring, and ear bangle we had found. This created a diversion. I wish I could remember all His Majesty told about them, for he has a large collection in Kabul and was keenly interested. Most of the coins are very old. One of the gold ones, an inch in diameter, is inscribed in Kufic characters, a language older than Arabic. This is a coin he gave to me, promising to send me the full history later. I am very proud of it as a royal gift. The ring His Majesty rubbed on cloth, then smelled it, and pronounced it brass.

After prayers in the open, His Majesty sat on the running board of the car and told me what a good photographer he was. I have seen his pictures; they are excellent. He was pleased when I asked for one of his own with his royal signature. The others are sold, the proceeds going to an orphans' home. Before leaving for Kabul, H.M. very kindly gave me his last cigar—best smoke I've had in a year. My assistant brought up some Indian cigars that were rubbish. Inshallah, I shall get to Peshawar in January sometime about two o'clock if I do not have to wait in Jalalabad.

There was a flurry of snow last night, and a little ice covers the pools of water by the roadside in the mornings. The leaves are going. Winter is near—the sheep and goats are straggling down from Turkestan, long lines of them winding down from the mountains on their way south. Their herders,

gypsies and Turks, are a picturesque lot. Thousands migrate to the lower plains when winter comes and then return to the highlands in the spring.

Write me what the outlook is. The Indian papers have little more than bare telegrams, and short ones at that, of American news. Just now they are full of the Balkans, and it is interesting reading. It is not spoken of here — contributions are being sent from India to the brave Turks who are wounded.

This will be mailed on the twenty-fourth. May it arrive! May you live! May you not be tired!

A Firman for Leave

RECEIVED FROM HIS MAJESTY*

Kabul, 27 Zul Hijja 1330 A.H.
7 December 1912

AFTER royal kindness be it known to Esteemed Mr. A. C. Jewett, Chief Engineer, Jabal-us-Siraj H. E. Powers, that we have the pleasure to sanction your two months' leave. The Foreigners' Office has been ordered to make your arrangements before December 21, 1912, the date on which you will stop the work for the winter, so that you may not have to stay in Kabul very long. When you finish your two months' leave, you have to try your best, also, to reach Peshawar in time, and you will find everything ready for you on your return, so that in starting the work next spring no delay may occur.

This firman is your pass for going and coming back, so that no one is to interfere with you in entering Afghanistan.

(SIGNED BY HIS MAJESTY) SIRAJ-UL-MILLAT-I-WADDIN
KING OF AFGHANISTAN AND ITS DEPENDENCIES

Kabul, 16 December 1912

I got this firman from His Majesty granting me two months' leave from Peshawar last week, and as it was beginning to snow and to freeze nights, we stopped the work. I sent my kit down on yabus last Friday. Halliday offered to take me down with him in his tumtum, so I sent my boy ahead. We said goodbye to Crawford and Kelly Saturday morning at eight and expected to get through in a day, as Halliday had a dak laid of four ponies at stations along the

*Translated by the interpreter at Jabal-us-Siraj. (Editor's note.)

road. 'Twas snowing. Halliday proposed that I drive—I found out the reason later. We made the first fifteen krohs all right. Then the second pony balked, and every time he balked and jibbed, Halliday would jump out of the tumtum. Well, we got along one kroh farther with the brute, the syce leading it and using the whip. (If there had only been some kind lady to stroke its neck gently and start it off at a trot, as they do in the S.P.C.A. stories!) About this time the horse behind overtook us, so we put him in again and got as far as Karabagh—then this horse began to jib. With the aid of persuasion we got him to the kal'ah of Khaja Babu, a distance of twelve krohs, by two o'clock.

We stopped and had tea supplied by my friend, Khaja Babu, and then, after taking observation, finally decided to proceed on our way. It was still snowing, but we had found a fresh horse and wanted to get over the pass before it got too thick. The fates were against us. Before we had gone a kroh our third horse started jibbing and had to be led by the syce. Snowing hard! We held a council and decided that it would be the better part of valor to return to Khaja Babu's. The pass is not a particularly safe place after dark anyway.

Khaja Babu, who is very hospitable, welcomed us back, saying we had done the best thing. He has a mehman khana which has a clean room upstairs with an earth floor and pretty red and blue glass in the windows. He brought rugs to spread on the floor and also bedding; we had none. Then he wanted to know what we would like for dinner. We told him not to make up anything elaborate, so he suggested kabob and chupatties—and added that he would build a fire in the middle of the floor to make the kabob where we could see.

Our host skewered bits of mutton on willow wands with alternate bits of fat and lean. He raked coals out of the fire and put a row of mud bricks on each side of them to lay the skewers across. Then all he had to do was to sprinkle the

meat with namak and keep turning the skewers until it was done. The windows were opened to let the smoke out, and we found it best to keep close to the floor as the smoke rose. The chupatties, made of wheat flour, were thin and about fourteen inches in diameter. They served as plates to hold on our laps, and for the rest—fingers were forks. Chupatties and kabob are very good. We had fresh grapes for dessert.

After getting partially dried out we slept very well, though there were some hard spots in the floor. I gave the son of the house a watch before leaving. Mahmud Jan, who is four years old, is a cute youngster and a great friend of mine.

We got off again at nine in the morning. Still snowing. We sent out all four ponies early and made it into Kabul by one o'clock. It was pretty heavy going over the pass and we had to walk a good bit. I am stopping with Halliday. Most of the court has gone to Jalalabad—all the ladies, that is; His Majesty is still in Kabul. No one knows when he is going and none of the Europeans is likely to go until after he does; some winters he remains in Kabul. I hear the roads are in pretty bad shape, with snow on the passes and mud beyond. This afternoon I am going to see what I can find out—also try to arrange for my transport from here.

17 December

The Esteemed Mustofi-al-Mamalik was very gracious when I called on him yesterday afternoon with Halliday, and wanted to know what he should give me to take down to India. I told him nothing but he insisted, giving me a rug from Chinese Turkestan, 128 pounds of pistachios, and 112 pounds of almonds. Very kind of him. He said Halliday was a friend of his—just like a brother, the inference being plain, but Halliday got nothing. We said goodbye.

My transport is ready and I expect my pay tomorrow. Inshallah, I'll get away the day after. 'Tis snowing again today. It looks now as if I shall be the first one to get off.

4:00 P.M. Just got word that the man with the keys to the money is ill, so I have to wait another day.

20 December

I sent word to my friend, Fazl Ahmad of the Foreigners' Office, on my arrival in Kabul—to arrange for my transport and to bring my two months' salary in advance. He came to see me and said everything was ready, with all preparations made, and he would bring my pay in the morning. I waited three days; the man who had the key to the treasury was sick—maybe. When the money came I said I would leave on the nineteenth. Then Fazl figured that since I would get to Peshawar on the thirtieth he would have to pay me one day short. (He was paying me up to the end of February 13.) I said, "All right, I'll stay here until the twentieth and earn the other day." (Save fussing about it when I come back.) This was satisfactory.

On the morning of the twentieth, the mehmandar turned up with eight yabus and a donkey (my allowance is sixteen yabus). I asked about the others. They were just around the corner, and the ressala had been sent for and was coming "by hand" in a few minutes. When they started to load my kit, I inquired again for the yabus. "More men had been sent for them," they were "eight miles away," and they would be there "almost immediately." I explained that it would be too late to leave even if they came. Told my boy to unload everything and have it carried back into the house—I would sit down to wait until all the yabus came. Sort of gave them the impression that I would cheerfully wait many moons if necessary. "All the yabus will be there in the morning, ba chashm!" I smiled and said, "Ba chashm-i-Kabuli?" They know what that means. "Trust a snake before a Brahmin, a Brahmin before a harlot, and a harlot before an Afghan." The most poisonous person that God ever put the breath of life into! You see, if Fazl could get me to leave with eight

or nine yabus, he'd charge the God-granted government up with the full sixteen and *earn* some money himself. Besides this, he pays the men 25 percent less than they should get for the yabus.

The Amir, himself, is, I think, the only one who would be straight with you—he says he hasn't told a lie for twenty years, but he can't and doesn't trust anyone, even his own brothers and sons.

On the way to Butkhak, 21 December

My boy called me at seven this morning and started to pack my bed. I told him to wait, as the yabus might not come, but they did at nine-thirty, twenty of them—four extra. When I went outside and told the men to load up, they all held their palms upward and invoked the blessing of Allah on the trip, after which they stroked their beards. Then I left my boy to watch the loading, telling him to bring me khubber if any shaitani or fights occurred. They had plenty of yabus, though, and there were only a few heated arguments.

I am taking down eighteen thousand dibs—about six hundred pounds or three yabu-loads, some for myself and some for the other Europeans. 'Tis the custom for anyone going down to take along money for the others, and I am the first one to go this year. Damn this cast-iron money anyway! If we could only get paper money or drafts, but the Afghans have no banks nor banking accounts, and good reason—they are afraid of paper money too. You give no receipt for any money sent down and are in no way responsible for it, but I have only known of a thousand rupees being lost last year, and they are thought to have been stolen before they started. Am taking along, also, a white Persian cat for a friend in India, the two hundred pounds of almonds and pistachios which I received as baksheesh from my "friend," the chancellor of the exchequer, and the gari keshes, my hired carriers. They are men who have come from India with goods

and will be anxious to get back. They are a jolly sight better than government transport.

We got loaded up by ten-thirty. I sent them off with my boy and the mehmandar and a part of the guard, telling them to go to Butkhak, which is only six krohs from Kabul—too late to reach the next stop beyond today. After staying for tiffin and saying goodbye all around again, I started off with my mehtar and two sowars. I had them send my own guard with me, for while the duffadar is a "pucka shaitan," the men are not bad—I'm used to the thieves and they know me. 'Tis pretty wintry, but the roads are passable. His Majesty, the Amir, the Light of the Nation and Faith, is going down to Jalalabad tomorrow. They have had hundreds of men cleaning the snow off the roads.

My syce had some sacks and truck on his pony, and after we got started there was a big row from behind. I turned to the guard on my right and asked, "Chi guft?" Divana (that is the name he goes by) gravely informed me that it was a hen in the mehtar's sack that spoke, and she said, "For God's sake, don't have me murdered for your dinner tonight!" Divana is a character, and the only reason I think he may be crazy, as his name implies, is that he does a bit more work than the others and grumbles less—this is abnormal. Maybe he just has a little better sense of humor than the rest.

There were signboards all along the road with hands pointing, and I couldn't think what they were for until finally I spelled out, "Keep to the left," or "By the side of the left hand remain." That's because of the motorcars, but it will take a long time for the camel-drivers and donkey-drivers to learn it.

I got to the end of the day's march before dark, and found my kit all in and stowed and dinner in the making. A little later my mail arrived—today is mail day in Kabul. A guard, who was left behind to get mine, brought a couple of letters

and newspaper clippings up to the sixth of December. I have been cracking almonds on the top of a box containing five thousand rupees. Tomorrow I'm going to fill my pockets with almonds and raisins, in case I get separated from the tiffin basket. Will try to get them to make a double march tomorrow and to take a short cut over the Lattaband if there isn't too much snow. It is going to be damned cold!

My fire is getting low and I'll have to save a few sticks for the morning. Am going to crawl under my sheepskin. Two more days and, inshallah, we shall be out of the snow.

Barikab (Fine Water), 22 December

I heard the guns in Kabul giving the royal salute early this morning, so I know that His Majesty has left for Jalalabad. The guard on the veranda outside my door last night said it was very cold. Don't doubt him—it wasn't very rotten hot inside. When we got away from Butkhak, I told them I wanted to go to Barikab. "Very long, Sahib." Then I told them they could go over the Lattaband—it's about twelve miles shorter. I went ahead with two guards. It was a bit slippery in places. The Lattaband ("Rag-tied") Pass gets its name from the tattered strips of cloth tied to the thorny bushes at the top of the pass. The Afghans believe that if they tear off a bit of their clothing and fasten it to one of these bushes it will bring them children and good luck. From the number of rags tied on the bushes it must be a popular belief. This short cut is generally taken by pack animals and those on horseback—the old road to Jalalabad went this way.

We passed the narrow gorge about ten-thirty, and a little later the iron cages where the highway robbers were left to starve. We met fully a thousand camels in kafilas of from twenty to forty. All but one lot were headed for Kabul. We reached the top of the Lattaband about two after a long, steady climb up another gorge, both sides of which were

lined with cliffs and hills of cement gravel. The country must have been under water at some time, for the stones were worn round and smooth like those in a river bed. The whole region seems to be made of these stones – three hundred feet deep in some places as the vertical cliffs show. I took a couple of pictures from the summit toward Kabul, which we could still see though we were one and a half day's march out. We had to make a detour to the left through the pass and from there you can see across a neck right down into the Kabul plain.

After a long climb down through the mountains, we got into Barikab at four-thirty – eight hours in the saddle. But there is no snow here, for it is much lower down and much warmer than Khakijabar, the last regular stopping place, would have been. The transport animals got in after dark. They have had a hard day's march. Shall only go to Jagdalak tomorrow.

23 December

Five o'clock and the kettle is singing on the hearth. Made a short march today, getting in early this afternoon. The gari keshes took all the short cuts and arrived as soon as I did. There was no snow lying, but the Safed Koh (White Mountains) on our left were pretty white. Tomorrow we shall make a long march to Nimlah. Then if we make a long march the next day we shall get into Jalalabad on Christmas, inshallah. I shed my big coat today and tomorrow I'll chuck my gilgit boots and fur cap and put on a topi.

While my men were loading the yabus this morning early, I climbed the hill behind Barikab to take a picture across the valley. The sun was just up, but maybe, if Allah wills, it will be good. I tried to get a picture through the door of the dak bangala of the telephone walla and his assistants sitting with their legs under a sandali. That is the way they sleep too – in fact spend most of their time.

My rest was broken a bit last night. There was a big

windowpane broken in my room in the bangala, and during the night a cat came in—a big Persian like mine, which was shut up in its box and, moerover, tied. The strange pishak first ate all the food mine had left. Then between them they got the door of the box open and started an argument. Now if there is anything I hate it's an argument, so I fired my boots and what was left of the firewood at the marauding pishak and shut mine up. But the cat came back. Three times I woke to see them sitting in the moonlight arguing, and so help me Allah I have never heard such powerful-voiced pishaks. At three o'clock I managed to bund the window with my saddle and the remainder of the firewood, and finally got to sleep after placing a box of two hundred pounds of rupees on top of the one containing my cat.

I have just had a call from Colonel Mohammad Rahim Khan—on his way from Jalalabad to Jabal-us-Siraj, where he has been appointed to take the place of the present man, who has been retired because of age. The colonel was very eager that I should bring him a camera from India. Regretted that he had no money with him. I told him that he could give the money to Mr. Crawford in Jabal-us-Siraj when he got there; Mr. C. could write to me and I'd bring the camera. You always get your money first in this country. The gentry are all camera-mad now, since it is the great fad of royalty. We smoked cigarettes—mine, kept for the purpose. I gave him a letter to take with him and told him Crawford would teach him photography. The colonel complimented me on my Persian, but we had to call on my boy before we got through with the camera bundobust.

I've been thinking that I shouldn't care to take this 250-mile trip through snow and across mountains and over deserts for any less than two months' leave. I have two months from Peshawar and it takes a full month to go and come—with delays, generally more than that, so it's three months really. It must cost His Majesty a bit too, for I have a ressala

Prisoners waiting to be tried in durbar-i-bandi by the Amir.

Most of the camel traffic passes through Afghanistan in the fall and winter.

Gangs of workmen shoveling snow from the government buildings.

The old palace at Jalalabad, built by Abdur Rahman. Its inner walls were nine feet thick.

The Sheer Darwaza, or Lion's Gate, showing the Kabul River valley, machine shops, and woolen mills.

The tomb of Abdur Rahman, Amir of Afghanistan from 1880 to 1901.

The tomb of Baber Shah, who conquered India in 1525, is tucked away in a corner of the Baber Sarai.

The Id Masjid in Kabul, the large mosque used for the celebration at the beginning and end of Ramazan.

An overflow of natives at prayer outside the Id Masjid.

At the mustofi's home in Kabul—the Esteemed Mustofi-al-Mamalik behind the table, and Mohammad Azim Khan at the right.

Band practice at Jabal-us-Siraj. The instructor plays a note or two and the students try to imitate him.

His Majesty, Habibullah Khan.

Mahmud Jan.

Jahangir Khan, an Afghan gentleman, and his servant.

Old Mohammad Bx, the khansaman, smoking chillum.

Khalil ullah Jan, "Sweet Friend of God," the eldest son of the mustofi. His foul vocabulary belied his name.

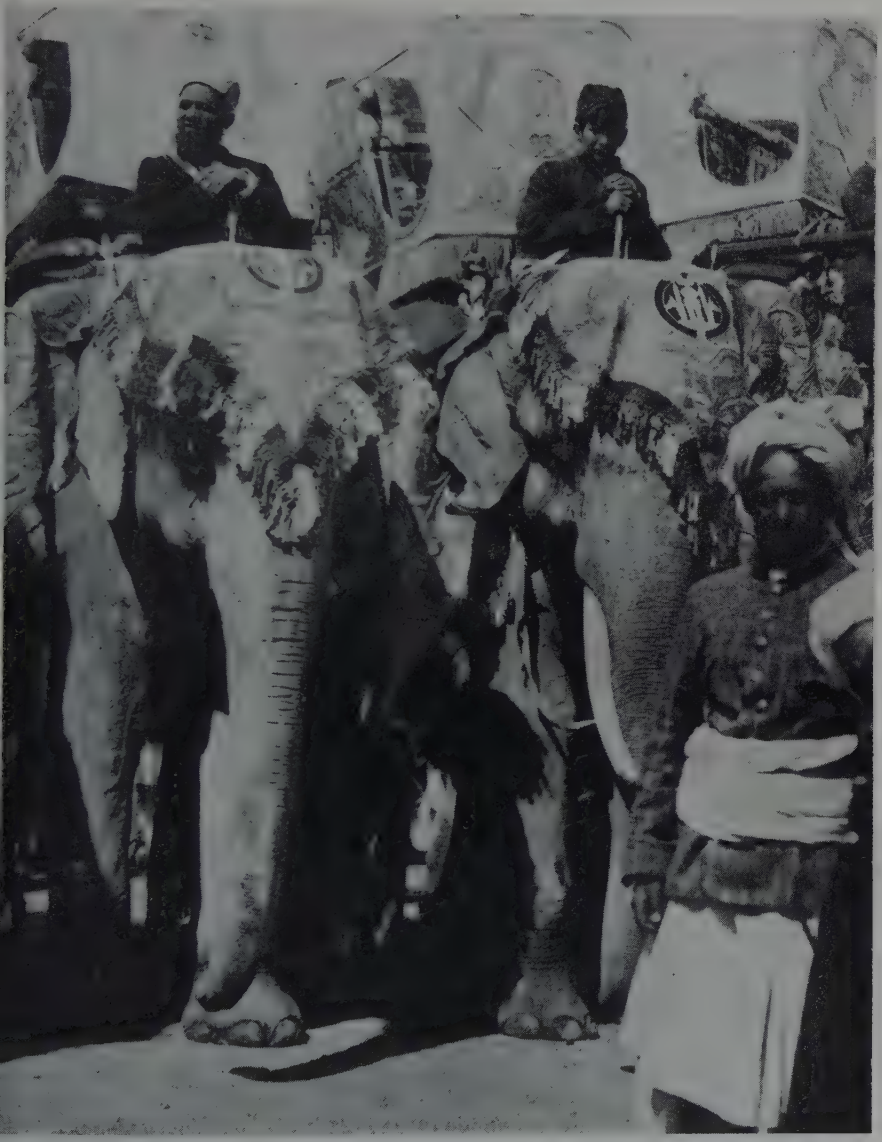
One of the author's bodyguards, recruited from Turkestan.

A guardhouse, with its marble milestone.

Afghan irregulars, recruited from the Kohistan district, who had just returned home from the Khost district.

Snow leopards guarding the entrance to the old fort at Jabal-us-Siraj.

The Afghans abhor image worship. These idols were brought merely as curiosities from Kafiristan by the Amir, Abdur Rahman.



The howdahs used in the ceremonial procession were made of solid silver, with trappings of cloth of gold.

The Baber Sarai, Baber garden, and the Chardeh Valley, seen from the Lion's Gate.

of seven, a duffadar and six guards, sixteen yabus, a riding pony, a mehmandar, and a farash (literally, carpetlayer) to look after the tents. All these have to be fed and housed, as well as my own personal servants, and God alone knows what is done and charged up in my name. The area we have been passing through is poor—nothing but stones and a few thorny weeds. From here I can see some scrubby trees on the mountain, few and far between.

If you are good in history you will remember that this is where the treaty of Jagdalak was signed. And now I'm off to the cot.

Nimlah (oranges on the trees here), 24 December

We left Jagdalak at eight. Riding ahead with two guards and the syce, I arrived at Surkhpul at noon and had tiffin in the dak bangala. Afterwards looked into the sarai to see if any electric parts were stored there, but it appeared empty and the godown dar said nothing had come this year.

Surkhpul (Red Bridge) is the first station before Nimlah. No one seems to know when the bridge was built, but it must have been several hundred years ago. It is the only bridge in the country made by the people themselves which has stood up and is worthy of the name. The river which flows through this barren country is called the Surkhab (Red Water).

The road was long and it was five o'clock before we finished our march—just getting dark. Directly after leaving the barren and mountainous district behind, one reaches a pretty little oasis on the edge of an open plain—Nimlah Bagh, a walled-in enclosure about four hundred yards square, containing flowers, fountains, and waterfalls. Tall old cedar and chinar trees form stately avenues. The chinars have been here since the time of the Moguls; some have decayed, but the hollow places in the trunks have been filled in with brick and masonry to preserve them. The art of tree

surgery is not new in Afghanistan. Passing through the garden is a canal, which has a series of waterfalls. In the masonry behind them are recesses where lights may be placed at night to illuminate the falls. Coming from the snows of Kabul in midwinter, one finds beds of narcissus, iris, and other flowers blooming in Nimlah garden.

There is a koti here for the Amir to rest in on his way going and coming from Kabul, and buildings for others in the rear. The gate of the bagh was locked and we couldn't rouse anyone. Finally after my ressala went around back of the enclosure, he found the khansaman, who said there was "no order for coming in." My men were getting worried and proposed telephoning, when I remembered my firman for stopping in the dak bangalas. Neither my mehmandar nor the guards could read it, but a man along with us could and he said it was all right. The khansaman took his word. I doubt if it covers this place, which is a private garden of His Majesty's—but we were lucky it worked.

We found the usual bangala—a rest house with not even a chair in it. I roosted on the veranda till the transport and the ressala got in at six-thirty after thirty miles over rough trails with pretty heavy packs, but there was no complaint—they expected one from me. After telling my boy not to cook me any dinner, I lunched on potted chicken, bread, and jam. He was up at five this morning. Most of the lot have walked the thirty miles. They have unloaded my kit and brought it inside, made my bed, and got everything ready for the night, even to cooking meat for the cat. Now they will be till ten o'clock cooking and eating their own food and cleaning my boots and gaiters for tomorrow. I don't know whether I want to make a double march to get into Jalalabad tomorrow or not. I'll wait and see what time the transport turns up in the morning.

Now I'm going to hang up my stocking. I'm tired and I don't believe Santa Claus will come anyway.

Jalalabad, 25 December, midnight

Left Nimlah at eight-thirty. Just after leaving, we passed a beggar who had suspended a Koran above the road and was sitting nearby with a cloth spread on the ground to collect rupees. Made Fatehabad, an intermediate stopping place, at ten. That vicinity has rather an unsavory reputation. When a European camps there, his mehmandar arranges with the headman of the village to furnish additional men to mount guard at night, keeping a record of their names. As these men are the thieves themselves, one is quite safe.

The country opened out after Nimlah. Arrived in Bauli at noon and had lunch under a tree. One of my men made a present of a couple of feet of sugar cane for dessert—this is Christmas. The gari keshes came along at twelve-thirty, so I decided to double-march to Jalalabad.

About three krohs from Jalalabad I took pictures of a rice husking mill and a sugar-cane crusher—both pretty crude devices. The rice mill had about the most primitive thing in the shape of a water wheel that was ever made. The shaft was a tree trunk laid on wood and stone bearings. The wheel consisted of four planks nailed to the end of the trunk; these constituted the paddles. The power-transmission mechanism consisted of two wooden cams, chunks of wood mortised into the trunk 180 degrees apart. There were two long poles pivoted over a block of wood, and when the wheel revolved the cams on the shaft engaged the free ends of the poles and caused them to rise and fall. On the far ends of the poles were fastened upright sticks, and when the cam released the pole these sticks, weighted by the poles, dropped on the rice and knocked off the husks. It looked like two gigantic picks in action. The sugar-cane crusher made an awful creaking. The arrangement consisted of a tree trunk hollowed out, and into that was stuck a pole with an outrigger, weighted with stones, which was pulled by bulls. The cane was cut up

into short lengths and fed into the top of the stump by one man, while another drove the bulls and rode on the spar for weight. The cane was crushed when the weighted pole rolled around over it. This crusher had a pipe made of bamboo running from the bottom of the stump underground into the house nearby, where the syrup was caught in earthen jars.

Crops of wheat, corn, cotton, beans, and sugar cane are raised in the fertile valley near the Kabul River. Fruit is plentiful — there are plums, apricots, mulberries, and oranges, but the oranges are seedlings and inferior in quality. The water from the river is generally turbid and that from the wells brackish.

Kabul lies sixty-one krohs behind over bleak barren stretches and ice-covered passes. From here the route winds through rough desert land. Inshallah, I shall make the pass on Tuesday.

Jalalabad

JALALABAD, with a population of about five thousand, becomes a city of importance for a few months during the winter. The city proper, with its narrow and dirty streets enclosed in mud walls, is situated half a mile from the right bank of the Kabul River. Besides the Amir and his court, many thousands gather here on its sunny plain to escape the snow and cold of the uplands. But the summer traveler finds Jalalabad most unpleasant with its intense heat, disagreeable dust storms, brackish water, and millions of houseflies. Outside the city are the palaces where the Amir resides from the middle of December to the middle of April.

26 December 1912

Arrived in Jalalabad at three-thirty, and after riding down into the bazaar found that neither my mehmandar nor the guards knew where to go. I sent the men off to enquire where I was to be quartered, and then had tea at Fennell's.* Soon afterwards Azimoolah, the court interpreter, came along to tell me that His Majesty wanted to see if there were fall enough in the canal here to get power to light the palaces and Haram Sarai—I don't get through the pass on Tuesday.

It seems that H.M. has been thrashing the ghulam bachas and his servants, the pesh-khidmats, and raising hell generally. Miller came along—he's stuck too, building roads and latrines. When I went to the officers' lines with him to see his quarters and mine, Azimoolah turned up there and for some time waxed eloquent on the corruption of the gentlemen of the court. One can always tell when he has been

*Fennell was an English chauffeur employed by the Amir. (Editor's note.)

checked or snubbed by the Amir; then he will chatter and talk loosely, complaining that there is no government in Afghanistan any more. At other times the Amir is the finest and best monarch in the universe.

We were just going out for dinner when H.M. sent for Miller, so I went to Fennell's place where we waited till nine. Finally a messenger came from H.M. to inquire if we were still waiting. He returned, and twenty minutes later Miller came back with a dish of rice and larks cooked by His Majesty himself. After a pretty good dinner, including H.M.'s dish and plum pudding, we drank whiskey and soda, smoked, and talked till twelve. Then Miller and I left for our quarters. 'Tis now 12:45 A.M. — Christmas in Jalalabad. Have made double marches for the last two days and am ready for bed.

27-28 December

Azimoolah came this morning with the colonel of the surveyors and a theodolite and level. The theodolite had the hairs in with the plate reversed; the level was broken and all out of whack — it had ropes for hair, and a homemade tripod all out of adjustment. The ashikaqassi kharaji, the foreign secretary usually in charge of public works, arrived, and we rode out along the ditch to the intake — about two krohs. 'Tis a thoroughly rotten proposition. The intake is in the river bed and the canal wanders around the old river bed for over half a mile before it leaves it — goes under another river through three arch tunnels made by Abdur Rahman. After tiffin I adjusted the level bulb and put in spider web, though good web was hard to find. The colonel said he knew how so I handed him the adjusting pin. He tightened the screw and said it was finished. There isn't one of them who can use an instrument — much less adjust it or tell when it is out of adjustment.

Another day. My transport wallas were around to ask when I was leaving. "We be poor men, sahib." I suppose

they will get nothing for delay and no feed for their yabus but what they buy and pay for themselves. Inshallah, I'll finish tomorrow. Only God knows when I can get away. I'll not make the pass this coming Tuesday anyway.

The colonel and six men came this morning to assist me. Leveled from spillgate in juy to the river (1900 feet, with a 25-foot drop), returned and ran levels up juy 7200 feet, finished leveling the canal, and wrote my report tonight. Miller came back from the links, but His Majesty now sends for him after dinner as well. My transport wallas came around again—they have no money, poor devils! I told them that if I got a chance I would ask H.M. to have them paid for their wait here.

29 December

Azimoolah came at nine this morning. I read off my report to him and he translated it. When the gari keshes came again, Azimoolah sent for my duffadar and had them put in bandi. I asked him if they should not be paid something. "Oh, it was sarkari or government work," he said. "The Amir will see to it."

He promised that he would try to get my report before His Majesty today. Fennell just came in and announced that the king was making turnip soup. Oh, hell! It's eleven-thirty now.

2:00 P.M. The king is taking a nap.

3:00 P.M. He is planting trees.

6:00 P.M. The king will ride out on the canal at eight tomorrow morning with me. He has read my report.

30 December

Ordered my horse for eight o'clock. Just before nine word came for me. Miller and I rode to the palace and lined up with the bunch. After another wait of about ten minutes, His Majesty issued from the gate on horseback, guards presented arms, and there was a flourish of trumpets. H.M. sa-

luted and started off at a trot. We followed. My shaitan of a pony kept me busy all the way out—four miles. We rode to a river bed, crossing a couple of small streams deep enough to make us hold our feet up. Then H.M. had a tent pitched and we dismounted. There were about thirty of the nobles in the cavalcade besides the escort.

His Majesty told me we would have breakfast first and work afterwards. Miller and I sat at a table alongside of his, and as usual he gave us food from his own service, after which he presented me with a pipeful of his tobacco. This is the way he works always. After examining my tobacco pouch, we discussed poetry, idiom, and ancient coins for over an hour.

He told an interesting story about some shield-shaped gold coins dug up recently at Kandahar. It seems they helped to throw light on an ancient tale of a king who gave a favorite a thousand "shields of gold"—which had been interpreted to mean a thousand shields *full* of gold. He promised us each a coin at some future time. After spending fully ten minutes on the work, he asked a few questions and said there was no need of his discussing it further, for I knew what should be done.

Then he went on to tell what he would do with the electric power—run machines for crushing sugar cane, ginning cotton, and lighting his new and old palaces and the Haram Sarai. "See what a lot of trouble it will save in the Haram Sarai. I have some patent gas lamps. The gas has to be pumped under pressure. They go out; then the man who knows about them has to be sent for, a hood is put on his head, and he is led in like a blind man. He is shut in a little boxlike screen at the foot of the pole. Then the hood is taken off and he does his work, after which he is covered again and led out. Very much trouble!" One of the young attendants led the blindfolded man into a ditch full of water one day for a joke.

His Majesty said we would return to Jalalabad, where he could show me what he wanted done in the way of lighting the palaces, and took me back in his motorcar. He showed me over the new palace from the bathroom to the roof, explained that it was all his own design, and paused for my praises — which were forthcoming. We went through the old palace and on to the Haram Sarai, where His Majesty went in first. After a bit word came that I was to come along with my interpreter; we entered and the doors clanged behind us. I only saw a dozen boys — wondered if they were His Majesty's. In the garden he asked me the name of a cedar tree. This led to more inquiries, and I am to get him seeds of trees from California — evergreens. There were ripe oranges on the trees in the garden.

After tiffin I borrowed a map Miller had made of Jalalabad and made a copy of it. Then Azimoolah came with the colonel of the surveyors, so we started out to take measurements of the buildings and grounds, working till dark. My men and the sappers and miners from Jabal-us-Siraj are here — arrived day before yesterday. I'll get some of them to help me tomorrow. I'm to see H.M. again after I make sketches of the layout, and he will give me further instructions. This is the day I expected to arrive in Peshawar!

His Majesty's palaces are outside the city. One built recently, a rather imposing large white structure, is called Siraj-ul-Imarat, or Light of the Buildings. Among the Europeans it is spoken of as the white elephant. The Amir had a raised platform erected beside the building, from which he superintended the work himself. He often brags about how quickly it was built. He told me he forgot the lavatories and later had them constructed on the roof at the rear, with a spiral staircase erected outside so that the sweeper could have access to them. One of the masons who worked on the building said that the workmen stood as thick as they could stand. They were so hurried that some of them got stones

without sufficient mortar and some even used mortar without stones.

The durbar hall in the palace has a dais for His Majesty's throne. While he was holding durbar-i-bandi there, I took some pictures of the prisoners who were under guard, waiting to be tried, some distance from the palace. His Majesty lays down the law with force; we could hear him shouting as he delivered justice.

On this occasion, one man was sentenced to be blown from the gun; another was treated with clemency and let off. When he was turned loose, he and his friends threw their money into the air—a way of expressing great joy. The prisoners were well ironed before they were brought before His Majesty. Their arms were securely pinioned with straps and they were held by a rope to prevent a desperate prisoner from making a rush at the Amir—a necessary precaution. A condemned man will curse the Amir bitterly.

Koti Shahi, the old palace nearby which was built by Abdur Rahman, gives a much finer appearance than any of those erected by the present Amir. It is a fine brick structure, much better built, with heavy inner walls nine feet thick. A large dome crowning the center of the building is thirty-seven feet from the floor. The architecture and general appearance of the palace have been rather spoiled by a grand lean-to built on to it by His Majesty.

31 December

Spent the morning measuring rooms in the new palace with my old man, Zulf Ali, and Ghulam Hassan. His Majesty greeted me out in front and told me to clear the workmen away before I took pictures of the palace. Miller and I had New Year's dinner and drank to our speedy departure.

2 January

Meanwhile, in the new palace and now in the Koti Shahi, I've had to take measurements and make detailed plans to scale for use in estimating the wiring—my only tools a two-

foot rule and a straight edge made by a carpenter. It's been interesting, but tedious and tiresome with no efficient help of any sort. I've been in H.M.'s bedroom, private office, billiard room, and all over the place. 'Tis a kind of maze, full of all kinds of furniture, and the rooms are fitted with monstrous candelabras — all glass dingle-dangles.

Azimoolah went to see about getting into the Kokab, the Star Haram Sarai, and the queen promised to be riding at two o'clock, but changed her mind and didn't go. Sometime earlier H.M. got into a tantrum over his food and went to Laghman. His Gracious Goodness has not returned. Miller has his firman, but cannot get his money. Tomorrow is Juma'h (Friday) and no self-respecting mirza will work. I am surely going to miss the pass next Tuesday, and it looks as if Miller will too.

3 January (Juma'h)

His Gracious Goodness got back at two-thirty today — he's been cooking the whole time. But his retreat to Laghman was so sudden that poor Fennell had to sleep in his clothes. At least Miller has a new promise for his pay in the morning. Inshallah, he may get it in time to send it off tomorrow.

I've finished His Majesty's private rooms. Saw him leave this morning on horseback with about forty following on foot — one man with a hatbox, another with tobacco, and so on. Azimoolah came in later and had the treasury opened, and I sat on the chests of treasure to sketch in the doors and windows. The doors of the room are fastened with American-made padlocks, and a bit of rag is passed through the ring the padlock goes through and is sealed with sealing wax and a seal ring. Wish I had what that room contained! I've been from the treasury to the rooms underground, dungeons which it is said are used for prisoners.

Azimoolah came again to say that their Gracious Majesties, the queens, would permit me to come to the Haram Sarai, so I grabbed some sketch paper and went.

The royal Haram Sarai, a separate, quite modern-looking building in a park-like enclosure, is surrounded by a high wall. The outer gates are guarded by old graybeards, generally spoken of as babas; there are no eunuchs. Each of the queens has her own allowance, quarters, and servants.

Had the usual wait outside — about fifteen minutes. Then we were met at the outer door by a young gentleman dressed in European clothes of the latest cut, high collar, tie, and all. He acted as our guide and showed us through the bedrooms and explained the queens' desires. This young man was addressed as "Khan," and it was some minutes before I discovered the khan was a lady. It seems there are two of these young women with short hair who dress as men and act as go-betweens for the haram and the outside world. Later I was sitting on a pile of cushions, making the most of the fading light to finish my notes. The young lady was chatting with the interpreter. She asked him some questions about me, which I answered, and when she found I understood a little Persian, she giggled and talked to me herself.

The ladies of the zenana do not have much to do except eat sweets, smoke, and play games, but very little happens outside that they do not know about, and report has it that they are great gossips. The penalty of looking upon one of the Amir's ladies unveiled is said to be death. H.M. has stipulated that when they sally forth they shall wear a triple fold of veiling over their faces: this they wear over their hats as our women do. I have ridden up close to a carriage in which there were ladies of the royal household, and if their veils were tripled they were of very thin material. The Amir has rather liberal ideas in regard to his womenfolk — they dress in European clothes and could easily pass as Europeans. The Amir even permits them to go motoring. The first time the queen rode in a motor she gave the driver, a European, a piece of jewelry to commemorate the event.

I worked like hell till four-thirty and got a sketch of the

place—of sorts. Went through everything. Their Majesties were in the garden somewhere, but I had to be preceded into every room and around every corner. Got a glimpse of a haram skirt or two dodging around before us and saw some of the royal babies.

5 January

We were moved into new quarters this morning—by order. As a matter of fact, I went over to the officers' lines just in time to see my kit leaving in transport carts, so followed over to the new barracks opposite the Siraj-ul-Imarat palace. Our rooms are upstairs, unfinished, and full of mud as usual. No glass in the windows—no hasps on the doors. Everything is in turmoil, with camels, yabus, donkeys, dust, and workmen everywhere.

When Azimoolah came over, I had him show me where H.M. wants the arc lamps in the Bagh-i-Shahi, the king's garden. H.M. was having lunch by the water tank on the east side, but I did not speak to him. Later my boy managed to get us something to eat; where he cooked it, God knows.

6 January

His Majesty left for Laghman again tonight—fifty miles. Only Allah knows when he will get back or when I'll get away. He sent his favorite queen down two weeks ahead of him, and then spent the whole time in the Haram Sarai in Kabul with the younger women and girls. Her Royal Highness won't speak to His Gracious Goodness—always a woman at the bottom of all trouble. There's been hell a'poppin, and H.M.'s temper is not the best. Though he has been very nice to me, this delay is wearying, and if I showed I was in a hurry to get away I'd be kept a month or two longer.

Miller has made all his bundobusts and leaves early in the morning. He is being sent to Peshawar by His Majesty, who kept him here after his baggage left and has been sending him food. Miller asked his mehmandar to get some hard-

boiled eggs, nan, and a chicken to eat on the road. The mehmandar returned with the first two, and when Miller asked where the chicken was, he said, "I cannot get you one without the order of the Amir." That's Afghanistan for you!

Miller told me that Mohammad Umar, own brother of the Amir and son of the Queen Sultana, one of Abdur Rahman's queens, asked for permission to build a bathroom in his quarters in Jalalabad. It was granted. M'd Umar ordered his head mason to get enough brick to build an addition to his house, thinking that the papers showing the quantities would pass through the Amir's hands unnoticed. But the Amir read the order, sent for the mason, and asked him how he was going to put fifteen thousand bricks in a bathroom. When the mason explained, His Majesty fined him three months' pay. What his brother will get I don't know.

Occasionally M'd Umar calls on the Europeans in Kabul. He must weigh at least three hundred pounds and is always careful to select a strong chair to sit in, explaining that one had given way once. It is reported that he talks sedition but is not powerful enough to be a serious menace to the Amir.

A royal firman is necessary to get any materials from the godowns or to have any work done in the shops. All members of the royal family have an allowance given to them; all officials and even the Amir's own sons can be given only limited authority, for they would be sure to abuse it. The royal hukm, which necessitates the handling of a vast lot of petty details by the Amir personally, is strict in this respect. Often it leads to absurdities. For instance, there are some old fire engines with hand-operated pumps in Kabul, used for extinguishing fires. One time the naib-us-sultana's house caught fire. No one dared to take out the engines without a royal order—and the Amir was eighteen miles away at Laghman. A post was sent and the hukm given, but in the meantime, of course, the prince's house burned down.

Have just written some letters for Miller to take down. We had arranged to do Delhi, Agra, and Cawnpore together. Hope it's colder than hell in Laghman!

7 January

Miller bade me goodbye at six this morning, bequeathing me some tobacco and a tin of sausages. Worked till dark on my drawings and then had a game of bezique with Taylor, who arrived recently from Kabul. Had a visit from Azimoolah today and tonight one Mohammad Aziz, the ashikaqassi kharaji, who is in charge of public affairs — including mine — called on me. Among other things, he told me the people here say that when a thing is bad or work is poorly done I say so, although it is not the custom in Afghanistan. He is quite a decent little chap, but he doesn't know straight up from sidewise, and he lies like a snake. He has been in India and speaks English, but it is reported that he can do little more than sign his name in English or Persian.

One day Mohammad Aziz approached the Amir while he was eating his lunch at a small table on the veranda of the Koti Setareh Palace. He had a letter projecting from his pocket, hoping it would catch the Amir's eye; it did. The Amir asked him what it was, and when told it was a little work, he flew into a great rage. He wanted to know what he meant by bringing work when he was eating his food. Was he blind? Could he not see? After calling him some choice names, the Amir ordered that two men should take the table, dishes and all, at which he was then eating, follow the ashikaqassi about with it, and never leave him. Wherever the poor fellow went, the men followed with the table; when he slept they sat at his bedside with it. This went on for a week. Azimoolah Khan, the court interpreter, told me that he finally plucked up enough courage to speak to the Amir and tell him that the secretary had been shamed enough, whereupon His Majesty laughed and let him off.

The ashikaqassi is nice appearing, but weak and useless —

the little that he ever does is done by his mirza. His Majesty appointed him to the position once to spite Azimoolah Khan. My work is supposed to go through his office and he has, in name only, charge of the transport. He is often present when I discuss matters with the Amir, but is always in a state of funk—just stands at attention and is hardly ever addressed. At a recent audience, His Majesty's only words to him were an order to bring me an ash tray, and I have been told that he fainted once in the Amir's presence. One of the ashika-qassi's schemes is to stick papers in his pocket, leaving a few inches showing. Maybe H.M. will ask him what he has. Sometimes he signs them; other times he throws them at him.

Everything is called a petition in Afghanistan, and it is not easy to get a petition before His Majesty. Since he's taken up golf, the people put petitions in the holes on the greens, but H.M. has ordered them burned unread. (He asked me about my golf the other day, but I told him I was all out of practice. I don't want anything to delay me here.)

Some one in Kabul worked out an enterprising scheme while the Amir was in the masjid praying. He climbed upon the roof and suspended a big placard, a petition, by ropes in front of the main exit just as the Amir came out. His Majesty stopped and took one look, and then grabbed it and tore it to bits. Later he made a rule that all petitions should have a stamp put on them; otherwise they would not be read. Then he took a fit and would see none of his courtiers unless they sent in cards stating their business. This was short-lived, I believe.

I miss Miller tonight. Taylor is a tailor. The Amir, who wears European clothes, is very particular as to style and fit; he gets European tailors up from India to measure him and pays them a salary. Which reminds me, while Taylor was waiting to see the Amir (everybody has to wait), he showed some of the goods he had for sale to the naib-us-sultana, H.M.'s brother and viceroy. This peeved His Gracious Good-

ness and he stopped Taylor's pay. Said if he were coming here for the naib sultana *he* could pay him. He won't! What is it – the "temper of the king" or the "favor of kings"? Still, good service is often rewarded. Miller has been promised a pension. He cannot figure out any way to get it though, for he's had about enough and contemplates escaping to his wife and family in Scotland next year.

8 January

Finished my drawings this noon. Now I am praying Allah that the Light of the Nation will let me off by Saturday.

9 January

H.M. still in Laghman planting trees. Halliday arrived at noon from Kabul and I fed him. Developed the pictures I took on the road.

10 January

H.M. still in Laghman planting trees. Tomorrow is the last day of grace for my pass this week. I wish H.M. and the queen would make up.

Azimoolah tells me that they had a row like this last year. His Majesty slept one night in a little summerhouse on palace grounds, observing sadly that he had no other place to go. All manner of overtures failed to soften the queen's heart during the ensuing weeks. Finally the queen and her household went into camp up the river. The Amir followed and camped on the opposite side, where he walked up and down on the bank within view, but Her Majesty took no notice of him, not even when he sat down on the ground and threw dust on his head. Then he sent for his little daughter, and after giving her sweets dispatched her with a note inviting the queen to have tea with him. At last she relented. His Majesty ordered up the tiffin basket, made the tea, and waited on her with his own fair hands. After showing her about, he returned with her to Jalalabad, leaving the two camps

and their retainers to follow as best they might. They lived happily ever after—till this time, which is much worse.

11 January

H.M. still planting trees at Laghman. Last week he kept them planting trees by torchlight on the grounds of the new Siraj-ul-Imarat palace till nine and ten o'clock some nights. All the courtiers and ghulam bachas had to plant a certain number of trees, and tend and water them themselves. One day the Amir asked one of the ghulam bachas if he had watered the trees he had planted. The Gentleman in Waiting answered, "Yes, Your Majesty." But the Amir was suspicious. When he walked over and looked, the ground was quite dry. He ordered a couple of watering pots to be brought, commanded the ghulam bacha to kneel, knocked off his cap, and had the water poured over him. Then he ordered the courtiers to throw dust and clods at the kneeling man, His Majesty himself assisting. The ghulam bacha was in rather a mess when they finished with him.

Sometimes the Amir punishes and humiliates his followers by ordering them to make common mud bricks. One day, coming back from Paghman to Kabul, one of the motor vans ran out of petrol. His Majesty became very angry and sentenced all the ghulam bachas to make several hundred bricks each; his private secretary, the shahqassi huzuri, he sentenced to make nine hundred. The shahqassi, who was hurt, asked His Majesty why he did not make it an even thousand. At this the Amir flew into so great a rage and called him such vile names that the secretary said he would not work for his royal master any more. But whatever the outcome was, I saw the secretary a few days later, immaculate, smiling, and as polite as ever. From what I knew of him, he was a very decent little chap. His job was no sinecure, for he had to make all the arrangements for moving, feeding, and entertaining the Amir and his guests. He was

rather a young man, small in size but big in power among the court parasites.

While on a mission to the old fort he wanted to buy a shotgun of mine he had admired. I decided he could have it for five hundred rupees. A few days later he sent my sarishtadar to me, with four hundred rupees and word that he would collect the other hundred later. My sarishtadar said, "Shall I send the money back to him?" I nodded. Shortly a man came from the secretary with the full five hundred, and got the gun.

When the Amir went to Laghman last time he was in a bad temper. He called for towels, and there were none. He sent for three pesh-khidmats and had them stripped to the waist and given three hundred lashes apiece. Then he told them they had three days to lose themselves, on penalty of a repetition of the dose. He gave their clothes to the payrahs who did the whipping, for baksheesh.

When H.M. travels about, his retainers always take along all sorts of supplies. If he calls for anything and it is not forthcoming, there's trouble. One day I was showing him some drawings out in a camp of his under a pavilion where it was breezy. He called for some thumbtacks, and they brought in a lot of truck tied up in shawls—all tagged and indexed. The tacks were on the index, but could not be found. The pesh-khidmats were all atremble. I managed to change the subject, and we continued with the drawings held down with stones.

I am getting some catches put on my doors and windows today. Heretofore there has been no way of fastening them. There are over eighteen thousand rupees in my room—part of my own and the rest I'm taking down for the others. 'Tis a curious fact that the money is probably safer here, where every man is a thief, than it would be in India or at home. If it were stolen they might not get the thief, but His Majesty would probably levy on the district for twice the amount,

return the amount stolen, and keep the rest for the penalty of thieving. The guards might have their throats cut.

Last month in Kabul a workman in the machine shops stole a charak of iron — about four pounds — giving a friend among the guards a kran to let him take it out. When it was proved that the guard at the gate was in league with him, the Amir ordered the guard to be stoned to death by the workmen of the shops. The general of the shops, Colonel Mohammad Azim, sent word that his men were adverse to this and suggested a milder punishment. But the Amir flew into a rage and sent back peremptory orders that the stoning be carried out. The men's hearts were not in it. After dark that evening the man under the stones groaned and asked for a drink of water — bara-i-Khuda. A soldier on guard heard him and called the "birgat" of the shops. He gave the man a drink and then picked up a stone and bashed his head in, for there was nothing else that could be done.

As a rule only religious crimes are punishable by stoning. His Majesty explained, however, that this man had been put there to guard against thieves, and that it was very bad for him to assist a thief — hence the severe penalty. The man who stole the small amount of iron would only get a jail sentence.

I have been invited to witness executions! And, of course, I did not go. To any European they are cruel and barbarous; to most Afghans, just part of the general pattern of their lives. One of my men told me that once he stood so near a dismembered arm struck him on the head. He made a face telling it, for any blood of that kind is considered pollution.

As a rule thousands attend and participate in a stoning. The condemned is untied and allowed to say his prayers; then the signal is given and the crowd is so eager that many of them get hit themselves. One day after a stoning I saw an old woman coming along with a big load of stones on her back. "Where is he? Where is he?" she cried, and was very much disappointed when told the show was over.

The three common methods of execution are: blowing from the gun, hanging, and having the throat cut—the latter the most common. A benevolent-looking old white-whiskered gentleman who was one of the executioners received a pension last month. He has a record of having cut thirty thousand throats. I am told that His Majesty has abolished maiming just recently—that is, cutting off hands, cutting out tongues, and blinding. There were two ways of blinding: one was to have the eyes pulled out and twisted off; the other, called blinding, consisted of slitting the eyeball and filling with quick lime.

When a murderer is convicted, the Amir in passing sentence will tell the relatives of the murdered man, "Now I will have the man killed, or you may have the privilege of killing him or taking the blood money as is the custom." Blood money allows relatives to ransom him for a sum of money—sometimes ten or twelve thousand Kabuli rupees, which would be five or six thousand dollars. The man is generally killed, for they want their revenge. According to custom the killing is done by the nearest of kin to the murdered man. Sometimes it is a woman. I know of one case where it was a boy of nine. After he had hacked at the throat of his victim for some minutes, the man cried, "For God's sake finish it," and an uncle of the boy took the knife and operated. One of my men told me of a case where a brother murdered his sister's husband. The sister refused blood money and insisted on operating herself. She cut her brother's throat and said she was now happy. Cheerful lot?

Whether the old prison—simply a big hole in the ground like a well, into which condemned prisoners were lowered and fed a slab of nan twice a day till they died—is still in use I do not know. I asked the court interpreter and he vehemently denied it, saying that Afghanistan had progressed beyond such things. Still, I doubt it; the denial was too strong. It is strange, but men used to live for years in that dark unsanitary hole.

12 January

H.M. returned from Laghman today, but I have seen no one.

13 January

Thirteen always was my lucky number. Azimoolah came with a letter from H.M., instructing me about getting bids for the new scheme and telling me I could go. Am off in the morning. Halliday and Taylor have loaded me up with twelve thousand more rupees. I've got thirty thousand now —four yabu-loads. There would be more, except that part of it is in gold and notes. My guard is armed only with swords this trip. Handling so much must be a temptation to my poor gari keshes, who get five or ten cents per day. They have been here since December 25 with no pay. Azimoolah and I went to the ashikaqassi kharaji to try to get them paid —nothing but lies! I'll pay them myself when I get down to India.

The Turkish Hajji

Girdi-kaj, 14 January 1913

MY KIT was packed and ready to leave by seven, but the gari keshes came without their yabus and said they had no money; even tried to work me for some. I don't blame the poor devils though. They think I'm lying when I tell them I'll give them some baksheesh in Peshawar—I'd be a fool to before we got there. Although my guard was sent for the yabus, this little side show delayed our starting till nine, making it too late to reach Basawal. On my way up last May I camped under the trees here at Girdi-kaj. It is a bit brisk o'nights now, and besides too dangerous with all our rupees, so I came into the sarai. For some reason there are few kafilas here; not many travelers are stopping for the night. My room has no windows or ventilators and only one door, that faces out on the central court toward a small masjid for prayers.

On the road we passed a Turkish gentleman with a fez and a long, flowing beard, whom I had seen in a sarai at Karabagh in Kohistan about two months ago. He is right next door to me—speaks only Persian, brokenly. Just now he was trying to send a man for grain for his horse and was being told lies about the price. Finally, my duffadar told the native that the Turk was a good Mussalman and that he should bring three seers of grain, which was what he had paid for. I heard him tell the guards he was going to Istambul via India after his work was finished.

I'm sitting in the center of my room surrounded by yakdans of rupees. The sun is just down behind the mountains and the light is going. Have had tiffin, and we, the cat and I, are fairly comfortable. My old duffadar has been inquir-

ing if I am going for a wife. When I told him I was not, he wanted to know what I was going to do with all my money. I answered that I intended to buy some land. Then he snorted, said I could only eat neem-charak (about two pounds) a day, and strongly advised me to get married. It worries them here that I have no wife; they don't understand why. There's no rest for bachelors anywhere.

I was chucked off my damned Turkish pony today—rather he shied and backed into a ditch, fell, and nearly rolled on me. I got on him again and gave him two krohs on the road, leaving my escort behind. He's a pucka little shaitan, but a bit quieter now. Must have lost my automatic out of the holster when I rolled. The duffadar handed it to me just before we got in. These people always keep anything for a while before they return it to you, maybe to make you realize it was thoroughly lost. Time for prayers.

Girdi-kaj sarai (later in the evening)

I've had a most interesting evening. The Turkish chap with flowing beard spoke to me on the veranda, and we passed the time of day by asking a few mutual questions. He told me that he was going to Rangoon and started to talk about rubies. He thought that there were no good ones in Afghanistan, for the ones near Jagdalag were brittle and worthless.

I was just finishing my dinner when the Turk walked in without knocking, sat down, and ordered another candle. He put down a queer-looking stone cup and saucer of black jade for me to admire, and by way of introduction told me to finish my dinner, ordering his man to bring tea for the two of us. Then he proceeded to tell me the story of his travels. He's been in Russia, Burma, India, and Ceylon—also Tibet and the bordering states, including Kashmir. Seems to be after rubies and other precious stones. He went from Burma to China and around through eastern Tibet, finding

rubies and diamonds in plenty—and gold! Made motions of scooping it up with his hands. And then at length, when he had collected two hundred thousand dollars' worth of precious stones, gold, old Chinese books done on silk, and old coins, an avalanche caught him and his outfit, sweeping everything into the river. All was lost—his collection, and his best friend and a servant who were drowned. For twenty days one time he and his animals went almost without food.

After that he ran into a lot of fighting; saw many throats cut and many lying dead. He mentioned a place called Lakhim (China or Tibet?). Well! At last, he came way around north and got to Kabul through Afghan Turkestan. He wanted to see the Amir for some reason—probably to show him what he had left or to get a chance to prospect here. But they kept putting him off and telling him to wait. After some time he was received by the prince, the muin-us-sultana, but still was not able to see the Amir. When His Majesty went to Jalalabad, they told him to go there after him, for he would surely see him. They wanted bribes which he would not give.

Finally, he asked them for God's sake to give him leave and let him go down to India. After three months he got a firman from the muin-us-sultana, and is now on his way down—al-hamdu lillah, "Praise to God!" He said Afghanistan is a bad place. The people are all liars and thieves, and there is nothing in the country but ignorance, greed, and shaitani. He spat furiously on the floor to emphasize his remarks. Mind you, he's a hajji (been to Mecca) and a good Mussalman. I cautioned him about talking so loud, but he said, "Be damn to 'em," or words to that effect, and spat upon the floor again.

He trotted away and brought me a Chinese coin which weighed ten pounds and was shaped like an oval washtub, only it was solid. He pulled a cloth out of his waistcoat and showed me some gold coins, Afghan, Turkish, and others,

and also some stones that looked like garnets, though he called them something else. I like the beggar and I only wish I could speak his language. He speaks worse Persian than I do, knows a little Hindustani, but says he has forgotten it (as I have). But every little helps; we even worked in a few French and Italian words. I think—rather, I know—that those who have knocked about the world can make themselves understood better than others. The Turk was good at pantomime and had a wealth of gesture.

He said he's going to Calcutta, then to Rangoon, and around the back way to Tibet—then, al-hamdu lillah, he will get two or three lakhs' worth of rubies. "I might find a big ruby in one day, worth a lakh!" Good luck to him!

Then he told again of how his whole outfit and the two lakhs went into the river. "Gum shud. Kharab! *Khaili!*" ("Got lost. Ruined! *Very!*") He held up his palms, shrugged his shoulders, wagged his beard, and ordered more tea—Russian teapots and cups. He cursed Afghanistan again, and I assented mutely. Remarked that I have many yakdans (but I did not say what was in them). We exchanged compliments and said goodbye.

I cannot put all of it down. If only I could speak Turkish, I'll bet his tale would be worth having. He is so fed up with the place and so glad to get a sympathetic listener, I think he'd have told it all. He says the English are good people, also the Americans. I must go to bed—double march tomorrow, and, inshallah, we shall make Dakka, the last Afghan outpost. I've the door ajar for ventilation. There are two guards there, lying down. One is propped up, but I'll bet he gets forty winks when I blow out the candle.

Dakka, 15 January

When I was taking a walk outside the sarai early this morning, I found the hajji addressing a meeting. "Adam astam." (Meaning "I am a man"—I think the inference was

that the guards of his ressala were something else.) "I have said my prayers, eaten my food, and am ready to start; my ressala has not saddled their horses. They sleep!" But he got away before my transport was loaded up.

We made Basawal by noon and passed right on, keeping clear of the kafilas till about three o'clock. Then after we got mixed up with the slow-moving camels we had to keep crowding by all the time. My yabus were pretty well fagged and the ressala was driving both men and animals. We reached Dakka just at sunset—that was well, for it isn't very safe at night in this vicinity.

This is the packed sarai I've read about. The incoming and outgoing kafilas meet here; there are drivers yelling and arguing, and camels inside and outside the sarai thick as they can stick, screeching and howling and bubbling. We have passed about five hundred that are still to come, and there must be a thousand here. It is just too late to get any good pictures, though I chanced one.

I found that the hajji had got in ahead of me and had pre-empted the only room, a big one upstairs. The sarai bashi said that if I were kushi, we could occupy the same room—the hajji had already suggested we might use the room together. I was sorry to turn him out, and I know he was disappointed, but I do not like his following. Besides, I've still got my thirty thousand rupees and they are easy to get at. My cook tent had to be pitched on the roof of the first story; things are rather crowded and there seemed to be no other place for it. The ressala is going to do guard on the veranda. We have been here only an hour, my things have all been carried in, and my boy has just brought tea. I'm tired of these double marches. I do not like to get far from my kit, and it's slow jogging; makes me tired to see the animals struggling along under their loads—poor devils, they are only fed enough to keep them alive.

It would be hard to describe the sounds coming up from

below, to anyone who had never heard a camel being made to kneel and Afghan ponies or yabus squealing. The latter are all stallions, and even after a hard day's march kick and bite and squeal for hours. At night they are tied with heel ropes to an iron pin in the ground or to something more secure if available, but occasionally one gets free in the night and runs amuck. Then there is pandemonium; they all join in the row and the packed sarai becomes a dangerous place. I have seen pack animals killed before these ponies could be caught.

The camels gurgle, bubble, and groan till you'd think they were being murdered. A camel objects to everything on principle.

> 'E'll gall an' chafe an' lame an' fight; 'e smells
> most awful vile;
> 'E'll lose 'imself forever if you let 'im stray a mile;
> 'E's game to graze the 'ole day long an' 'owl the
> 'ole night through,
> An' when 'e comes to greasy ground 'e splits
> 'isself in two.

While being loaded Mr. Shutur kicks and bites and spits, but when he is started, and the rope from the ring in his nose tied to the tail of the one in front, he gives very little trouble and mouches along at a slow, steady gate. When one man harbors a grudge against another, the Afghans call it a shutur gharz, for they say a camel will hold a grudge for years and watch for a chance to bite or kick his enemy.

Coming out from Kabul last December, I passed three which had fallen on the road. The camel is not safe on slippery ground, either mud or ice. When he slips and goes down, his legs spraddle out, breaking the small of his back near the hips—his weakest part. When this happens the owner cuts the camel's throat, skins him, and uses the meat for food, thus saving part of his loss, one thousand rupees for a good one (or from three to four hundred dollars).

I can see the entrance of the Khyber from here, and inshallah, we shall be on British territory by one o'clock tomorrow afternoon. My guards stop at the boundary line and British guards, the Khyber Rifles, escort me through the pass. There is a big difference in the two armed escorts: the British smart and well mounted, these with no uniforms or only odd pieces, mounted on scrubby ponies, and armed with antique swords. Most Europeans experience a feeling of relief on reaching the boundary—I think I shall, anyway.

I can hear my old duffadar having a row with someone. He's just called him, "son of an accursed father," and now a pig—that's a pretty bad word here. The old swine asked me today if I were kushi with the guards. Told him yes, with the exception of himself. One of the guards is his son—he's rather decent. Another is a son-in-law, who can read and write and is called a mullah by courtesy, one I call the thief, Divana, and two more—six altogether, and a duffadar. They change them every two months, but I've had these over a year. They are better than the average lot of thieves, bar the duffadar, so I asked them to stay with me. For some reason they did. My mehmandar isn't worth a damn; he's only a bacha and has never been on the road. My boy is a rustler though, and my mehtar and farash are old hands. I've just been asked to write a letter to give to the duffadar: "This is to certify that the duffadar, Khaja Mohammad Khan, has brought me safely to the Afghan frontier."

Meanwhile the hajji came up to call on me, wanting to know if I were angry. I explained that I was not and asked him if he were comfortable. He was. We swapped cigars and cigarettes. When he saw I had only six cigars left, he dumped half of his cigarettes on the table. Then he repeated, "Bisyar digh shudam az Afghanistan, Sahib." ("My heart is very sore about Afghanistan, Sir.") He has been kept here for months at his own expense in the hope of seeing His Majesty, yet he had not even seen a picture of him. I gave him a cabinet

photo of the Amir and he was very pleased. He thinks of writing to the papers of his experiences here, when he gets to India.

Landi Kotal, 16 January

Talk about babble and hubbub—that was the sarai this morning. My yabus could not load in the little square in front of my place because they could not get through the door with their packs. We had to take them outside—camels walking over and barging into everything. Finally we got them loaded. Then my duffadar said that there was no order for his going farther with me. I thought he was lying, but guess it was so. Anyway, I talked him into starting out with me. We did not leave until nine. I was told that the serang at Dakka would supply guard from there. Called for them and three ragamuffins turned up and fell in with the procession. When we got to the first Afghan guard station, I lined up my guard, took their picture, and gave them some baksheesh and rukhsat. Told the duffadar my heart was sore about leaving Afghanistan, and he said he was grieved at my going. Both of us lied that time.

We fell in again after leave-takings and proceeded on our way, escorted by three Afghan riflemen who had no uniforms and few clothes. One had a gunny sack for a headdress. These three were relieved after about two miles. Then we got a third relief with khaki uniforms, loose-waisted tunics, and caps, who took us to the boundary where we were met by the Khyber Rifles. There was a squad waiting at a bend in the road. The Afghan guard fell out and two of the British fell in, marching ahead of us—soldierly-looking chaps with pucka turbans. When you looked up you could see groups of sepoys on points of vantage above the road and you felt things were right again.

A little farther on we sighted the first British blockhouse, a square stone building surrounded on all sides by barbed wire entanglements. There were no doors below, but iron

ladders led to the second floor. Doors and windows had bulletproof iron shutters. From here we began to climb, winding in and out along a road which had been cut into solid walls of rock. There were blockhouses at every strategic point and whitened stones all about the hills—range marks, I take it.

The sun is always just up or just setting when I have an opportunity to take any pictures, but I took some in the sarai at Dakka this morning. There were little girls and old women dodging about among the camels before it was light, picking up the dung. Some had baskets, and others used the aprons of their skirts or head cloths. I watched one little girl about ten years old who was under and all about the camels; her hands got so cold she had to stop to blow on her fingers every few minutes. There was keen competition, as fuel is scarce and dear, and camel dung serves as wood in Dakka.

We got into the sarai under Landi Kotal Fort at one-thirty, and have just had salmon from the Columbia River for tiffin. It's been 250 miles to Jabal-us-Siraj and back too. I've only one cigar and one cigarette left—no tobacco in the sarai bazaar either. This place seemed pretty kutcha to me coming up, but it looks better now. There are two rooms and a bath fitted up in a corner of the sarai with carpets and furniture. The hajji just came to me with two new Indian rupees, wanting to know if they were good money, and I assured him that they were. He was very pleased to get out of Afghanistan.

Later

I sent a note to the C.O. at the fort when I got in, asking for permission to leave in the morning ahead of the kafila and to telephone Peshawar for two tongas to meet me, so that I can load my silver into them and get in before dark. I won't have any guard after Jamrud and it won't be safe. At five-thirty an orderly came to tell me the tongas wouldn't get in till nine-thirty in the morning, and I couldn't make

out about the kafila for he spoke only Pushtu, which is a beastly language.

I cursed the C.O. for being too mighty to reply to my note, and sent another asking him to write me one, as I could not understand his orderly. Among some of the Europeans in Afghanistan the officers at the fort have a reputation for being snobbish. I got an answer this time. Captain Campbell wrote, "You can leave at 7:45 A.M. tomorrow before the kafila goes out and, as you suggest, transfer your loads from the yabus to the tumtums which will meet you. Won't you come up and have dinner with us now at eight o'clock?"

I had half a mind not to accept, but am glad I did. I scrambled into dinner clothes and went up with the guard from the fort. Captain Campbell explained that my first note wasn't delivered till five-thirty—the fault of the sarai man. They were very kind and kept me talking till eleven-thirty. I tried to break away, but Captain Campbell insisted so gravely that the clock was fast, I almost believed him.

They stood around the fireplace and I sat in a big easy chair, yarning about Afghanistan and answering their questions. The officers were curious about the forbidden country beyond. One asked if I carried a pistol and remarked that it might come in handy for myself sometime—this in all seriousness, and it is so. Outside of the moral effect of going armed a pistol would not be of much use, and if it had to be used one would stand little show of getting out of the country alive afterwards. Still it would not do for a man to go unarmed in a country where everyone travels armed to the teeth; it has its moral effect where every man is chiefly dependent on his own fighting ability as a last resort. An Afghan will kill a man for the clothes he wears, if they are worth more than the price of a cartridge, but he will think twice before using one on small game, where he can use a knife instead.

They wanted to know if they could do anything for me,

and I admitted I had smoked my last bit of tobacco. Everyone pressed cheroots on me, and Captain McCartney went to his room and brought back a tin of Craven tobacco, insisting he never smoked a pipe anyway—liar. The guard took me down to the sarai again. The Union Jack looks about as good as Old Glory to me now, and a challenge from the guard is like a salute.

17 January

My boy overslept this morning, and when I went out to look around I found the gari keshes just beginning to stir. I addressed them as illegitimate sons and asked them if they were going to sleep all day. Found one smoking a chillum in my kitchen, kicked it out into the open, and got things going. I bought food myself for all the yabus yesterday as the gari keshes were on their last, so I had to be just a little harder than usual or they would think I was easy.

It was a scramble to get away before the kafilas. Most of them were loaded and ready to start when we finally left, picking our way through animals and men.

> Lean are the camels but fat the frails,
> Light are the purses but heavy the bales,
> As the snow-bound trade of the North comes down
> To the market-square of Peshawar town. . . .
> And the picketed ponies shag and wild,
> Strained at their ropes as the feed was piled;
> And the bubbling camels beside the load
> Sprawled for a furlong adown the road;
> And the Persian pussy-cats, bought for sale,
> Spat at the dogs from the camel-bale; . . .
> And there fled on the wings of the gathering dusk
> A savor of camels and carpets and musk,
> A murmur of voices, a reek of smoke,
> To tell us the trade of the Khyber woke.

We met my tongas about five miles on, and stopped in the

middle of the road to transfer the boodle from the yakdans into them. Halliday had given me the wrong key to one of his yakdans and I had to break it open with a hammer. I had thirty thousand rupees in sacks, biscuit tins, boxes of Kabuli rupees, and cigarette tins full of sovereigns. The old hajji buckled down and helped me to sort it and load it on the tongas, while a crowd of hillmen and the transport wallas looked on. Don't think I'd have liked to make the transfer without the guard.

I offered the hajji a ride with me and he promptly accepted. We started off, winding down now with the transport left behind. Every little bit there would be a shout from up on the cliffs, and looking up you'd see a couple of sepoys with rifles and the sun shining on their bayonets. The old hajji's eyes would shine and he'd say, "Hindustan, al-humdu lillah!"—stroking his beard as a sign of extreme pleasure.

We passed Ali Masjid at ten. The incoming kafila had not arrived yet. Shortly after, we met ten lorries drawn by elephants. These were the generators and turbines that His Majesty told me would arrive in Jabal-us-Siraj in December. I took some pictures of the elephants and they ought to be good—some anyway. 'Twas cloudy and sort of catch-as-catch-can. Now we began to meet the tourists in motors and tongas going to see Ali Masjid; they are not allowed to go farther, but go away thinking they have seen the Khyber. I sat wearing my old topi and smoking a pipe, with a Mauser on the seat beside me, my feet on a bag of rupees, and looked down on the tourists with scorn. A little later I signed my name in the book at Jamrud fort, and we started on the twenty-mile stretch for Peshawar with the mountains and the Khyber behind us. The hajji was stroking his beard and I could hear my boy bucking to the tonga walla in the tonga behind. The hajji gave me a bit of his nan and a hard-boiled egg—and we were happy. Got into Peshawar before the bank closed and dragged in the loot. The hajji had been

asking if there was a bazaar in Peshawar. When we got into town his eyes began to widen; he asked more questions and when he saw a railroad engine said "Al-hamdu lillah" again. Hadn't seen one for two years, nor I for twenty months.

When I drove to the hotel Dean threw up his hands, saying he hadn't even a tent. I threatened to kill the Persian cat I'd brought him. Well! I had some tiffin; the old waiter was one I knew from Kashmir days and he grinned when I told him to bring me eight rupees' worth of ham and eggs and a whiskey and soda. Camped about till nine and got into a tent—someone had left on the evening train. My gari keshes got in at dark. Had to send my boy back for them, and he went clear back to Jamrud. The swine there tried to hold them up and blackmail them for sarai money. Guess my boy is tired. He says he's eaten nothing since morning and looks like a sweep. I've forgiven him everything; he's been a godsend on the road. I'm tired too—pretty full day.

18 January

Spent half the day at the bank sorting out rupees, and then visited the Afghan sarai with Havner,* who is still sorting out the electric parts which were dumped there a year and a month ago. Later tried to do some shopping, but it is Saturday and the shops are closed.

When I gave the gari keshes food for their yabus at Landi Kotal, I told them that they should go to their own dear brothers and the Amir. One chap said, "Hich!" (meaning, literally, no king of his). Yesterday I told them to come to me this evening. When they arrived I lined them up and explained that their work was sarkari and that it was their own Mussalmans who were cheating them of their pay—gave it to them hard. Then I gave them a good big baksheesh and they held their hands up, gave thanks, and

*Havner was an Englishman, employed to protect the hydroelectrical machinery in the Afghan sarai from exposure. (Editor's note.)

stroked their beards. Poor devils! They have done pretty well for me, considering.

The pictures taken between here and Jalalabad turned out fairly well, with some good ones of the elephant carts in the Khyber. Have been packing, sorting, and writing letters. Have wires from Lahore and Cawnpore—wanting me to come. Leave at eleven in the evening for Lahore and then go on to Cawnpore to meet Miller. Cabled home and now I'm waiting for my train; I am a gentleman of leisure. Tamam shud—it is finished.

On Leave in India

Aville, Lahore, 28 February 1913

MY FRIEND Atkinson, who worked for me in Kashmir, met me with his trap in Lahore and we drove out to his bangala, the Aville, in time to bathe and change for dinner. Seems good to see ladies in evening dress again, smart servants, and a well-appointed house, and to be able to sit down to a good dinner.

My two months' leave is going fast. I went to Cawnpore and from there to Bombay, where I didn't have a minute's time between working on His Majesty's new scheme and shopping.

When I was surveying in Jalalabad, I told His Majesty that it took me a day to get a level in shape.

"But I have bought many good instruments," he protested.

"That is true," I replied, "but to give one to any of Your Majesty's surveyors is like letting a child play with an expensive gold watch."

"You buy what you want and do not let anyone else use them," he said firmly. "I'll give you a firman on my agency in Bombay." The Amir sent me one for a thousand dibs.

When I got to Bombay, I went to the Esteemed Colonel Ghulam Rasul and presented it. The colonel was very gracious; he wanted a bribe.

"You may come the day after tomorrow at twelve," he said.

When I arrived at the appointed time, I was told that he was in the mosque praying. I did not return, but sent a letter saying that if he did not pay the money in two days, I would take the firman back to the Amir. He tried to find me at the hotel, but I was out. Then he sent word that he would pay

over the money if I delivered a receipt. I sent a man with instructions not to let go of the receipt till he got hold of the last fourteen dibs. He got it.

I spent a week in Delhi, but finding it rather slow returned to Lahore. I am stopping with my friend Atkinson, who is making from thirty to fifty thousand rupees a year now, having taken over his father's business of contracting for timber and sleepers for railways. His assistant is an Englishman I knew in Srinagar. There are many of my old Kashmir friends here.

Atkinson belongs to the Hunt and Lymkhana Club and has some fine horses, dogs, and many prize cups. He will sit up till two in the morning and be off riding to hounds at six. The other day when we were at tiffin he called his pet horse into the dining room. It wandered around the table and was fed by the ladies. Sideboards and glassware were all about the place, but the horse was just as sleek and well-groomed and careful as a gentleman. We go to the races, hunt meets, play tennis, bridge in the evening—everything but sleep.

I am sending home a packet of papers, the *Siraj ul Akbar*, the first paper published in Kabul (the smallest one is the first copy), a map of the Khyber district, a lot of rubbish I amused myself by writing last winter, and a diary I kept on the way down. Someday, inshallah, I may write an article on Afghanistan.

The papers in India publish any sort of rubbish they can get "from our special correspondent"—some servant generally, for the Europeans are chary of talking if they expect to return. The Afghans are very jealous of news of any sort given out. Anyone suspected of making reports to the British would get into serious trouble, and they are so suspicious that the most innocent thing might be misinterpreted. Anything outside of Afghanistan is British, for there are few who know anything at all about geography or the world outside their own borders. I have met a few of the most bigoted,

arrogant, and ignorant people I have ever known. You could write reams and still be unable to convey what the country and people are like. You have to see for yourself.

Anything published in an American paper about Afghanistan is copied by the English papers, which His Majesty gets and has read to him. Now you know why I do not want to contribute anything. If I did, what I wrote would have to be very diplomatic and therefore far from the truth. I saw a cutting from a San Diego paper out here—something about "The Wily Amir and His Objection to Railways. . . ." Anything is all right just so long as there are no slighting remarks made about the Afghans. It is better to say nothing. A little slang or American idiom would not be understood, and too much veiled language would lead to suspicion. They are past masters in that art themselves.

His Majesty, the Amir, has been very fine in all of his dealings with me. He's the best of the bunch, and if he didn't have such a poisonous lot about him he could accomplish something. He's vain to the last degree, arrogant, and despotic, but he could not be otherwise. He's fed daily and constantly with the most fulsome and sickening flattery. No one ever contradicts him, and there is no one he can trust. He knows it.

Peshawar, 14 March

Well! My vacation is over and I've had a very pleasant time. Got into Peshawar at midnight, and my boy met me, along with my Kabuli syce. He's evidently stayed here to hold his job. I refused to give him a retainer, but my boy has been on half pay—they will probably get it out of me later. The syce greeted me with, "May you not be tired!" and made a dive to kiss my hands. You should have seen him come to heel the first time he saw a train, the night I left.

More trouble! My bearer, who is a Punjabi Mussalman, came to me today for one hundred rupees in advance to get

married, and we leave day after tomorrow. The rupees are to be spent on a feast for the wedding guests.

"Think of it, thirty-three dollars to get married," I expostulated over the expenditure. To begin with, that was an outrageous amount for a servant to ask from his master.

"I've never been married before," he said earnestly.

"Spending so much is foolish," I continued, beginning a lecture on the sin of wasting that amount of money on a feast.

"But," he explained, "it is the custom. If I do not have a tamasha and give all the relatives and guests something to eat, they will say I did not 'feed the pigeons.' They will make gossip and bad talk about me. If the sahib does not give the money, I have to get it from the bunnias and pay eight annas in a rupee."

"You would be insane to go to the money lenders," I protested. "That is just exactly 50 percent." (There are sixteen annas in a rupee.) Often in India a man borrows money for his wedding celebration, gets into the hands of money lenders, and his grandchildren pay the debt.

"The sahib can take ten rupees from my pay a month," he insisted. "There will be no trouble."

I've given it to him. Praised be! He will get married tomorrow and start for Kabul the following morning, leaving his wife behind.

That swine of an Afghan postmaster, the Afghan agent in Peshawar, opens and reads mail! I hate the sight of him. He makes one all the trouble he can trying to get bribes. The Europeans doing business in Afghanistan bribe him, as well as other officials—more's the pity, but they could do no business otherwise. It is doubtful if the Amir has many bigger thieves than the Esteemed in his employ. Afghans say that he has stolen lakhs from the government since he has been in office. I have been told by sardars a caravan never goes through the Khyber that he does not rob of at least five hundred rupees.

"Why do you not tell the Amir about it?" I once asked one, who had been telling me what a bad man Ghulam Haider was.*

He shrugged his shoulders. "Why should I make an enemy?" he said.

The outfit of a European going into Afghanistan includes sixteen yabus. If Ghulam Haider can get you off with eight or ten animals, there is so much extra profit for himself; for the Amir, one may be sure, is charged with the whole sixteen. When you leave he presents you with a box or two of cheap cigarettes and commends you to God.

My yabus have just finished loading, mihrabani-i-Khuda! Eighteen yabus and they took me two hours to load. I'll follow tomorrow in a tumtum and overtake them at Landi Kotal. May Allah have you in his keeping!

*Ghulam Haider's career as Afghan postmaster at Peshawar ended on May 7, 1919. The British Indian government discovered that he "was using his office as a center of propaganda and was planning a local outbreak at Peshawar to make it convenient for advancing Afghan troops to capture that strategic city." The British arrested Ghulam Haider and his conspirators three days before the raid through the Khyber Pass. (Editor's note.)

The Elephant Carts Are Coming

20 July 1913

ON JUNE 24, I heard that the elephant carts had reached Tutundara, two krohs from here, where there are three fairly large canals with country-made bridges of wooden poles across them. I had ridden over the week before to see them and had given orders to have the water turned out of the canals and the bridges shored up from underneath when the transport came along. Mohammad Yusuf, the Khan of Tutundara, had made a pretty fair job of it.

You will remember that I passed these carts in the Khyber Pass when I was on leave in January—that was five months and a week ago. They stayed in Jalalabad during the winter and have been about two and one-half months actually on the road, which is about 250 miles. There were nine carts, fifteen elephants, three revolving fields, three armatures, and three turbine casings, each piece weighing 12,500 pounds, 6600 pounds, and 8800 pounds respectively.

When I hove into sight of Tutundara, the procession had just started down the hill, led by the local fife and drum corps and about three hundred men from the village. They were crossing the first canal when I arrived on the spot. The timbers creaked and cracked, but by the grace of God the carts got over safely, elephants and all. Every time one passed over without breaking through, there was a wild burst of music and shouting.

These Kohistani drums are about the size of a nail keg and they work both ends. Fifty of them can make some noise. It reminds me that the brass drum in the royal band, a single-ender, gets 188 blows a minute—I've counted 140

on a slow tune, and the bass drummer can keep this up for half an hour without intermission. It seems longer if you have nothing else to do but listen to it. The object seems to be to hit the drum as many times and as hard as possible during the entertainment.

After we had seen the nine carts across the three bridges, the khan invited me to have tea under the trees by the river side, along with the ghulam bacha huzuri in charge of the transport and the fil bashi, who is master of the elephants. We had tea, half and half (half tea and half sugar), with raw cucumbers and cherries. One of the chief pastimes of Afghans is to go into the country to sit on a shady river bank and drink tea and eat mulberries, other fruit, or melons, according to the season.

Then I was ready to start back to the fort, but the ghulam bacha wanted me to stay and see him across the steel bridge over the Ghorband River, which was put up last year and has a capacity of twenty-five tons with a large factor of safety. You see, if anything did happen to the bridge, it would be well to have the evidence of the sahib that everything was done in order. I laughed when he said the elephants were to be taken off and the carts pulled and pushed over by hand, but he told me it was His Majesty's hukm and he dared not disobey. The elephants too were shy of the new bridge.

There was still another one to cross, the steel bridge over the Salang River just before you get to Jabal-us-Siraj. The carts arrived there about five in the afternoon, and all got safely across to their destination, bar the last one. It broke an axle about two hundred yards from the powerhouse.

The men brought them through pretty well, all things considered: the roads, the long haul, and the fact that all they had with them was one jack screw, an anvil, a hammer, and a wrench. It was something of a job to unload them, as there was scarcely any wood to be had for blocking, but

after we got the cases on rollers the elephants did the rest. The cases arrived in good shape. They were very well packed—but none too well, as the armatures had a narrow escape. Only one case out of the six was riding right side up. The shafts of the rotors were painted and covered with burlap which was soaked full of the white lead. The man who did the job would probably find it hard to believe that the shafts were rusted when they got here. The burlap must have been put on when the paint was wet, and water seems to have followed the fiber through to the shafts. In some places the burlap was worn through, cut by the edge of the wooden support. However, the shafts were not damaged—I have removed the rust and repainted them.

Three turbine shafts, which arrived in Peshawar naked, were so rusted and scarred that they had to be condemned. I do not know whether they were cased together or singly. To date I have received about 5 percent of the electric parts. I have figured out that at the rate we have been getting plant material for the past two years, it will take a little over twenty-six years for it all to arrive. It's the custom of doing last year's work next year.

Fifteen elephants and about seventy-five men on the road for over five months. Considering that two thirds of the road was across desert and barren mountains, where the food for the animals had to be brought long distances, plus the inevitable rake-off of at least 100 percent, it must have cost the Amir an ample sum.

When the elephants are idle in Kabul, the Afghan in charge does not like to let them go because he grafts part of the supplies allowed for their maintenance, and for the same reason the master on the road keeps them out as long as he can. Every year some of the Amir's elephants are starved to death because their rations are stolen.

The first of May, on returning from leave, I was seedy with malaria and took quinine for about ten days. Somehow

I picked up the fever in Jalalabad. Then two of the sappers and miners blew themselves up tamping a hole where they must have struck a spark. They were slightly disfigured, but are still in the ring. Kismet. Wonder it doesn't happen oftener.

In a couple of weeks we will have the walls of the powerhouse up as far as we can go without iron. Am working on the canal now with 250 sappers and miners, and one hundred locals, mostly weavers, who don't know a pick from a shovel or how to use either. A promise of another hundred men came today from the chancellor of the exchequer, inshallah.

About twenty-five hundred feet of the canal runs along the side of a cliff of boulders and gravel. There was nothing to do but shift the whole hillside clear to the top — about a hundred and fifty thousand yards from a slope that is steeper than one-to-one in places. The fact that it is a mass of boulders makes the task difficult, but I am doing some high-class engineering on it. We have brought water to the top, and are running it over the edge and washing it down, sluicing the debris and boulders as big as one's head through pipes made of empty iron-cement barrels riveted together. The cost of a wood or iron flume would be prohibitive. There is no wood to be had, or much of anything else for that matter, so our engineering is done with what little there is available. We wash out gravel for a while, then roll the big boulders down and haul them out over the bank with our elephant. Big ones that are round in any way he pushes with his head against a cushion I have had made for him, and he will shift boulders weighing a ton. Of course, we keep a crew for blasting those which cannot be moved. Our pipes do not last long, and it keeps the blacksmiths busy making new ones as fast as we empty the cement barrels. If it were not for the water our work would be endless.

We are making the doors and windows of the powerhouse from the material available. The only wood we can get here

is a species of poplar or mulberry, in the form of poles and chunks the size of ties. It comes from forty or eighty miles away on camels and donkeys, as does the wood burned in the Kabul machine shops and that used by those who can afford it. The scrubby brush on the north side of the mountains is packed in, too, and made into charcoal. Loads of thorny shrubs are gathered from the almost barren mountains, so far from here that only one trip can be made in a day. This is the sort of fuel that is used for cooking, for heating, and also for burning lime and brick.

The poor people, the majority, cannot afford wood. They burn camel and cow dung, shrubs, roots, grass, leaves, or anything else they can get. The sappers and miners cook their food with the roots they dig up on the work. It is a marvel how little fuel they use, but on a wage of a few cents a day they cannot afford wood unless they steal it — and they are artists at that.

We are making progress slowly. The men tell me that they have never worked as they have under me, and the officers still have to stand up. They do just that and nothing more, and know less about the work than the rank and file, which is going some. The suffering miners have to buy grain from the government godowns out of one dollar and sixty cents per month, generally two or three months in arrears and minus an officer's rake-off. They are usually in debt on payday. About half of them run away and it is not the cream that remains. Over 120 ran away since last year. The local men who are gathered in and made to work for two or three months at a time get paid something sometimes, but not enough to hurt.

An Afghan hates to work for the government. One cannot blame him, for he is treated like a slave. Forced labor — one in every eight requisitioned for periods of three months — is paid ten rupees a month. Some laborers make a business of substituting for those drawn by lot. Masons, carpenters,

blacksmiths, and other skilled laborers are paid thirty-five to forty-five rupees a month; gang bosses get from four hundred to one thousand rupees a year. The workmen claim that they can make double the government wages for hire, so most of them loaf all day on the job and supplement their wages by working evenings and holidays for private parties.

Sometimes when you check a man for slacking toward the latter part of the afternoon, he will ask you if you don't really think he has done enough for four or five cents a day. There is food for thought there, especially when you remember he has been doing it maybe for twenty-five years, hasn't seen his family in the meantime, and wouldn't know his own children if he saw them. Seems curious to think of a rake-off from one dollar and sixty cents per month, doesn't it, but I think it is about 20 percent. There is no end to the ramifications of the rake-off system; I do not see how it could be more thorough.

One of the noble kaptans took French leave a while back. He heard that his brother down Kandahar way had run off with his wife. He took an oath on the Book of Books to cut both their throats, and also admitted that he'd have to do the same with the children, too, as he couldn't be sure they were his in the light of what had happened. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth is the law that prevails here.

Once I stopped at a village headman's house on the far border of Kohistan. When during the evening the vendetta was discussed, he told me of a case in the village, where the widow of a murdered Pathan secretly trained her two-year-old son to use a pistol and conceal it in his sleeve. He was nine years old when he got his man.

In our excavating on the site of the old city of Parwan, renamed Jabal-us-Siraj by the present Amir, we uncovered what is reputed to be the location of two forts, both "very old," which belonged to brothers, "very big men" and but-parasts (Hindus, that is), and 'tis said the place was destroy-

ed by an earthquake. There was nothing aboveground, but we dug up tons of brick as well made as ours, pottery, plain and ornamental tiles, a hand stone-mill for making flour, and several other household utensils. There were tombs, cut stone, clay water pipes, old copper coins inscribed in Kufic, arrowheads, and a plinth of what might have been a tombstone or foundation for an idol, which had bricks beveled and set in steps.

I discovered the head and bust of a Buddhist figure of excellent workmanship, done in bas-relief on stone. The figure, of course, was bashed and broken, for your good Mussalman never misses an opportunity to smash a but, the figure of a living creature. The curator at the Lahore museum said that this figure was not Buddha but a disciple well on the way, one who would soon become a Buddha, and that this was the farthest north Buddhist remains of this sort had been found.

Three large earthen jars were turned up near the same place. They were covered with flat stones and contained a little charcoal and a few pieces of what were taken to be human bones. There was another jar about five feet high and two and one-half feet in diameter, which was undamaged, and a carved inscribed stone, apparently Buddhist. They were from twelve to fifteen feet below ground, so must be pretty old. The ground above was cultivated. I suppose an archaeologist would be interested in what we have found and would object to our sluicing most of it into the river. As near as I can make out, this city or fort was Hindu and must be from fifteen hundred to two thousand years old. There was a town built on it at a later date.

Afghanistan shows much evidence of tremendous upheavals in the days long past. On the faces of cliffs and on the hillsides, there are areas where the stratum is completely doubled back over itself. The whole country is very shikast, as the Amir put it. They tell tales of a big earthquake in

Kohistan, seventy or eighty years ago; the date seems to be rather uncertain, but they claim that it threw down all the buildings in Jabal-us-Siraj. There is also a legend that the old city of Parwan, on this site, was destroyed by "a big quake very long ago."

The fast of Ramazan lasts a few days longer. I shall be relieved when it is ended once more. In order to begin work at five in the morning we must get up at four. The elect abstain from food and water for fifteen hours, from 3:30 A.M. to 6:30 P.M. It is hard on the workmen, and the weather has been hot too. July averaged eighty-four degrees for a full month—many times it was that by three in the morning. Almost every day during the summer, the wind rises about two in the afternoon and blows a gale from the north. I have noted that some mulberry trees lean away from the wind even when it is not blowing.

I am just recovering from the dhobi itch. The only effective remedy I could find was tincture of iodine, which removed about a square yard of hide, but it did the business. I'm getting to be quite a doctor. My last case was two broken fingers complicated by infection. Now I am treating a bad hand—wish my reputation were not so good. The hardest things to contend with are the dirt and the unsanitary conditions.

His Majesty has not been here since last November. I doubt if he comes up till just before he goes to Jalalabad sometime in November. Have heard nothing from him since last year, except for two letters about fruit trees and a firman to send Kelly to the palace, which never reached me. Then he wrote a month later wondering why I had not responded and saying the matter was urgent. The ressala that was posted on the road to Kabul to carry the mail had decamped.

The chancellor was here today, and I had the pleasure of calling on him. He has not seen the canal work for a year. I suggested he was too lazy to go up on the work, but he

said that he had been very busy and he will come some other day. Then he will know about it—not!

I think this is about enough for this time. May you not be tired!

Jabal-us-Siraj, 19 October 1913

The summer is almost gone. Have not been outside a one-mile radius for months. We are working with from six hundred to seven hundred men and are getting some work done in spite of obstacles of many kinds. Now toward the end of the season we have altogether as many as five hundred men besides suffering miners on the work. Armed guards were sent out to bring them in. They do not like to come, for the pay is small and they have to work—is it any wonder that they are the laziest people God ever breathed the breath of life into, and the biggest shaitans?

I believe the scheme to shift the hill cut down time about two years, so we shall finish excavating the power canal before winter. Work on the powerhouse is being held up for the lack of five large girders. We have accomplished more this year, but neither the transmission line nor the substation has been begun. There would be no one to supervise the work anyway, for one of my assistants is in Kabul working on the lighting of the new palace begun thirteen years ago. It keeps Crawford and me busy looking after the men here. Yes, there are some officers, but as far as supervision goes they are negligible. A lost-motion expert would go mad here in twenty-four hours—the conditions are almost impossible to explain. Next year, inshallah, we shall finish the powerhouse and put in the dam. It is a satisfaction akin to the joys of conquest to accomplish something in spite of all sorts of hinderances.

The ghulam bacha huzuri appointed by His Majesty as sarishtadar on the work last year died, by the kind will of God, shortly after we started. Peace be to his ashes! He was weak and a rattlesnake. His Majesty appointed as his repre-

sentative Mirza Mohammad, another ghulam bacha who is a Usbek from Turkestan. But apparently he was going to show the farangis a thing or two and started to ride the high horse. I took absolutely no notice of him for a month, so he climbed down a bit and made a very good superintendent (for this country) — hard working and trustworthy. Note that he is not an Afghan.

I have just begun to think of my fall house-cleaning and a new coat of mud for my roof. Have been putting in a few improvements — two new shelves and cabinet, my own design, made out of tree trunks and worked up by hand. Prices are going up here, too. My meat, vegetables, and milk cost me eight dollars a month. I pay two Kabuli pice apiece for eggs, one and one half for small ones; this works out at about six cents per dozen. I have only eaten three pounds of butter this year. Tonight I had a tin of Oxford sausages made out of oxen, and last week I had a tin of peaches. I tell you the simple life is the best.

I think we are going to have a hard winter. The neighboring mountains began to take on snow the first of the month of October and it has turned colder than last year.

There is a weekly rumor that His Majesty will make us a visit shortly. We have something to show him this year.

The Sparrow and the Wisdom of Sa'di

Jabal-us-Siraj, 9 December 1913

WE WERE honored by a visit from His Majesty, the Amir, on December 4, the first time he has been here for over a year. First came a company of troopers and some Maxims (a cousin from the north made a try for the throne about two months ago and His Majesty is being very careful); then three or four motorcars full of sardars and other parasites, and finally H.M. arrived just as I was sitting down to tiffin. There was a shamianah erected on the river bank for an audience tent, and I got there in time to salute as his car pulled up. When H.M. got out he shouted for me—you can hear him for half a mile. He shook hands and after greetings immediately started to tell of his exploits at golf. He does as many as fourteen holes now, walks five or six and rides the others—much better than last year. Finally I got in a word about the five girders that are holding up our work, and H.M. told me the fable of the man and the sparrow, which was very instructive. Here it is as nearly as I can remember:

"A man caught a sparrow in his hand and the sparrow said, 'If you will let me go, I will give you three pieces of advice.' The man agreed. The bird said, 'The first is, do not believe all that is told you; the second, never grieve for anything that has gone from your hand. Now if you will let me go and sit on the limb of that tree, I will tell you the third.' The man let him go, and the sparrow flew up into the tree. Then he said to the man, 'I have three ounces of diamonds in my crop.' The man began to curse and to grieve for having let the sparrow go. So the sparrow said to him, 'You had me in your hand a moment ago, and you know that I only

weigh one ounce. How then could I have three ounces of diamonds in my crop? You are a fool and have not followed the two pieces of advice I gave you and I shall not give you the third.' And the sparrow flew away." The moral being, as I took it, not to grieve for the girders. And besides, how could the elephants get over the passes now on account of the snow? I wrote for the girders first eighteen months ago, but it is hopeless; the elephants have been requisitioned. Inshallah, they will come first thing next spring. I have the promise of a king.

His Majesty inquired if we had had tiffin, and kindly invited us to sit at a table next to his when I explained that we had been interrupted. We had fruit from India, musk-melon from Turkestan, and a special dish from the Amir's own table. Finally the royal cigarette case was passed across, and H.M. was hugely delighted because I had to be shown how to open it. Then he told me how busy he was. (He hasn't done a tap of work this year; what time he is not in the haram is spent motoring, hunting, and golfing.) His time was limited and he wanted to see all possible in one day, as he was going to Jalalabad.

After prayers H.M. inspected the powerhouse. Then he mounted his milk-white steed, rode halfway up the power canal, and got back to the fort by three o'clock. He asked me if I had anything more to say, and not having had the opportunity to say anything so far, I said I had—so H.M. very graciously said he would see me in an hour's time. After prayers at four o'clock he sent word by the ashikaqassi mulki that he was very busy on the fort and would see me in the morning.

Next morning I stood by till about twelve-thirty before I was summoned. We were given breakfast on the veranda of the palace inside the fort and told that H.M. was ready to depart. Then he sent for me. He was seated at a small table inside, surrounded by officers, sardars, and other parasites.

I could see that he was tired. He had worked *so* hard and had used up all the time he could; I knew there wasn't much left for me.

"You will be seated," His Majesty said, looking like a boy who had been kept after school. Crawford and I were placed in the center of the gathering before the Amir.

"What have you to say, Mr. Jewett?" he asked.

"I wish to thank Your Majesty for sending me a better sarishtadar this year," I replied. "When he first came I did not like him for he trailed around with a cane and a following of mirzas and havildars, but he has done better and is worth four other men."

The Amir was pleased. "Thin ice melts quickly in the sun," he said, smiling and regaling me with the wisdom of Sa'di. "When people get acclimated there is a better understanding."

"Your Majesty sent me twenty students and I wish to ask Your Majesty's advice," I continued. "Eight of them are idle and useless, not worth their salt—never have been or would be; six have done very little and are not progressing much; and six have improved." I was a bit curious, not knowing what would happen. One could hear a pin drop in the room.

(I want to mention here that these twenty apprentices have been rather a nuisance and hard to control—a lazy, lying, fighting, stupid, charas-smoking lot of haram-zadas who played hooky, bribed the hakim to give them sick certificates, and raised merry hell generally. I tried to teach them mathematics a bit, but finally gave it up and would have nothing to do with them. When I told the ghulam bacha I'd report them to His Majesty, he said I must report to him—"No!" I must write to H.M.—"No!" [He'd never get the letter.] I think they fixed it up that the ghulam bacha would get part of the students' salaries, and he would report them always present. This year, the new ghulam bacha took up the student question and I went through the same thing

with him, but I guess he saw something in my eye, for when they played hooky he put big irons on them, made them carry stone, or had them thrashed. Sometimes he asked me if it should be irons or a thrashing, and if I said I didn't care, they generally got both. But they did not think I would speak to H.M. That's not etiquette in Afghanistan. I waited two years, but this opportunity came.)

His Majesty listened, considered a moment, then shouted, "Call the chancellor. Bring paper, a pen." (Four men bolted outside after the mustofi, and paper and pen were forthcoming.) "Now write. This is our order: The eight students that are useless, Mr. Jewett shall give their names. They shall be sent away at once and forever barred from government service; the six medium shall remain on the same pay at thirty rupees; the six who are good shall have their pay raised as Mr. Jewett reports according to their work." (Note that thirty rupees is captain's pay and that these boys were being paid to learn.)

All over in three minutes, but I managed to mention some more names of workmen who had done well (comparatively) and got in a few more words about the students.

"Some with the best heads will have to be sent away," I explained. "Others who are not so smart will be kept because they have tried."

"Quite right! A house may be very fine outside and very cheerless within," His Majesty agreed, and went on to deliver quite a little lecture—very instructive, and kind of H.M. to give his time. He is a wise man and sees clearly when he puts his mind to it.

"An honest hard-working beggar is better than a dissolute prince," he continued, quoting Sa'di at length, and stood up three sardars to illustrate his point in disposing of three classes of men. By chance (or design) he selected my friend, the ashikaqassi kharaji, Afghan foreign secretary, to represent the class of useless servants that should be sent away.

None of the students will ever amount to anything in this atmosphere with no order, discipline, or honesty anywhere. Still, the little training I can give them may have some slight effect on their ultimate, illegitimate grandchildren.

I asked His Majesty to sanction two hundred feet additional for the pipe line, and he drafted a firman before I said ten words. A letter concerning payments to the Peshawar bank was handed to him. He read this and passed it over to Azimoolah Khan to ascertain if their translation was correct. Then I gave him a memo of my own about marking and packing. The way this job has been handled has been equivalent to "asking" for this.

I had managed to hold the Amir for twenty-five minutes — about ten of which were effective. By this time he was on his feet and ready to bolt, so I had to say I was finished.

"Can plans be made for lighting the palaces now?" he asked unexpectedly.

I said they could and explained what could be done.

"I want to put wires in the new palace, so that I can furnish it. Then I will not have to tear it up later," he said. (The night before, he had ordered fourteen new doors cut, and half a dozen brick partition walls torn down to make larger rooms.) "You are to make plans as you think best, and get out an estimate for what is required."

Then he took me by the arm and steered me about the palace to explain how it was to be lighted. We spent half an hour while H.M. had me write the names and uses of the rooms on their plastered walls. (Next day, I found sheets of iron nailed over my scribblings, and the mason explained that the people were such shaitans they would erase all the marks otherwise.) When I make a plan of the lighting it will be no small job; the palace is large and full of all sorts of nooks and crannies like a bunny warren — I had my fill of it in Jalalabad.

We arrived downstairs and H.M. said goodbye to us. Then

he turned back, took me by the hand, and held it. "I am pleased with your work, Mr. Jewett," he said.

"Many thanks, Your Majesty. That is gratifying." (We have done a bit more this year, by the aid of God and strenuous coercion. And this year's work is about done—eight more days will see the end.)

My report to His Majesty created quite a stir. Delegations met me outside to find out which were to be sent away. "Oh! But the mustofi must know tonight," they insisted.

"No!" I told them, "I shall give it out tomorrow." The students made bets and spent the night trying to guess who were elected. They were fairly certain of three, but eight! My trouble was to select the ones to remain.

Next morning we paraded the students, all twenty present. Big audience! Everyone from the commidant down came to see the show. I picked out the best one, Fakir Mohammad, and stood him up. Told him he was lazy and a charas smoker, that he never used his head—paraded all his faults. The second best and youngest of the bunch, Dur Mah'd, was scared speechless. I berated him soundly and lined him out. (The ghulam bacha suggested that Dur was only a boy and I shouldn't be too hard on him.) Then I started a second line, picked out Ghulam Nabi, a nice, well-dressed chap, too strong to work. He always tells the other fellow how to do it and keeps his hands clean. He had a satisfied smile as he headed the line, but his expression changed when seven others were lined up alongside him. As I shot out the names of the down-and-outs there was a silence that hung heavy. At the end I turned and left them. I do not think Dur Mah'd realized he was at the head of the class until next day.*

I proposed to forego my leave this winter, and asked for five months next year to take in the Panama Expedition.

*There were only three of the original lot remaining when I left the country, and they had been retained not for progress in their studies, but because they had become more useful than the average. (Author's note, added after his return to the United States.)

The Amir smiled and said briefly, "There is too much work ahead."

"Your Majesty might send a representative," I persisted, trying to arouse his interest. "All the countries are invited and it will be a big tamasha."

His Majesty was not impressed. He has read the papers. "England and Germany are not going. They are angry about the canal," he said, making his complete and final judgment.

I could see that the subject was closed. I tried to explain, but it was futile. When he thinks he knows, he won't listen, and there is no use arguing.

I have just finished a letter to His Majesty, giving the names of men who have done well (always comparatively speaking). If he does not forget it or ever reads the letter, some will get their pay raised. This latest discipline has had a very satisfying effect on more than the students. I'm tired tonight, body and soul.

29 December 1913

We stopped work on December 22 on account of the cold and snow. The dehatis were turned loose and the suffering miners went south to Jalalabad the short way, via the Tangeh-gharu. We left for Kabul the same day.

Christmas morning I inspected the sarais containing electric parts and then had tiffin with the Mustofi-al-Mamalik, chancellor of the exchequer and the biggest thief in Afghanistan. Later, Crawford, Kelly, and I took our beds to Halliday's house to spend the night, since we did not want to return to our places late in the evening. There were five of us Europeans together, and after a very good dinner we sat around a big grate fire, drank port, and sang songs until midnight.

We spent most of our time in Kabul sorting out electric material. Several strings of camels had been coming in loaded with G.E. cases. On the twenty-eighth I received seven

months' pay. Came in at two in the afternoon, and it took until midnight to count, sack, and box it – three yabu-loads.

Earlier in the day I called on the mustofi, who presented me with a goatskin robe, two astrakhan pelts, and an old Afghan gun with pearl-inlaid stock, sixty-four pounds of pistachio nuts (these are worth one dollar per pound in India), some raisins, almonds, and pignuts. Very nice man, the mustofi, and he hopes I won't say anything derogatory about him to His Majesty. I don't fancy these presents. I always tell him I want nothing, but it is no use and one cannot very well refuse.

We expect to leave soon for Jalalabad – may get leave sometime, inshallah. I don't know where I'll go, for two months won't take me home, and I don't care to go to England for so short a time. Think I'll wait and see. God be with you!

Thieves and Budmashes

THE mustofi, chancellor of the exchequer, is also Naib Salar, second in command of the army, and Malik-al-Mamalik, Head Malik of all the Maliks. This official, Mohammad Hussain by name, generally spoken of as the mustofi and considered the second most powerful man in Afghanistan, began life as a common mirza. He rose to be kotwal during Abdur Rahman's time, and many stories are told of his cruelties. Kohistanis who knew him then claim that he was an ambitious scoundrel who would tolerate no rivals. Besides, when prisoners escaped he would send to the bazaar for tribesmen to replace them. If the old Amir had heard of that, the kotwal's life and career would have ended suddenly.

When the mustofi became chancellor of the exchequer during the reign of the present Amir, he contracted to turn over a certain amount to the government. Needless to say, he made a fortune collecting taxes. Sometime ago the Amir asked him for an accounting, but I know that three years later he had not given it. Last year the Amir was going to have him executed for some of his deviltry. The mustofi threw himself at the royal feet, promised to be good, and obtained a pardon. He made a visit to Kohistan shortly after this and made presents to all the maliks as an expression of gratitude.

Once some of the people about the court spoke of what a kind, gentle man the mustofi had become.

The Amir protested, "No, you are mistaken! The mustofi is a wolf! It is only because he is under my hand."

The mustofi erected a long weaving shed in Jabal-us-Siraj to be used in winter. It had small windows and was poorly

lighted. His idea was to charge each weaver four rupees per month, but they refused to use the place, saying that it was too dark and that moreover they could not afford the rent. I was with the mustofi when he went over to investigate. He had half a dozen of the head men thrashed, while he sat and asked them how it felt and if they liked it. Suddenly a peculiar shout went up, and most of the men started over the hill toward the next village. I think the mustofi realized he had gone too far. He began to ask questions, then said that he had not investigated the case properly, and sent emissaries to get the weavers to come back. There was about half an hour's wait before some of them returned. The mustofi explained that he had not understood, and talked to them like the kind old gentleman he is not! The men said the beating did not hurt much, and the rents were remitted.

The mustofi has a large house in Kabul, three estates and houses in Kohistan, much land, and many camels. His camels go from Turkestan to India, and of course that is the way he makes his money, though some say otherwise. When the mustofi comes to Kohistan he brings a much larger following of retainers than the Amir. Once the band played the "Salam" for him, which is equivalent to "God Save the King." Some smiled and some said, "Suppose the Amir heard of it!"

This is the intriguing and unscrupulous Mohammad Hussain — the Esteemed Mustofi-al-Mamalik. All other budmashes defer to him. It would not be wise to underestimate his power.

For instance, Mirza Malik Shah, a writer as the prefix to his name implies, helped me with Persian the winter I spent in Jabal-us-Siraj. Malik Shah is a satellite of the mustofi, who sends him to Afghan Turkestan to collect taxes. Between times he is employed as a spy. He would stand for the Afghan mirza type: intriguing, slippery, and full of lies. The majority of these mirzas are grafters and a bad lot, but it is said that when it comes to a question of firearms or knives

they are mostly cravens. Perhaps there is some truth in that, too.

Next is Kawus Khan, a renegade Parsee turned Mussalman, the chief tarjuman or interpreter for the mustofi. With little knowledge he is, in fact, interpreter of English in the Foreigners' Office in Kabul. (Some Englishman who sojourned in Kabul for a time wrote that this office was invented by Nasrullah Khan, the naib-us-sultana, for the sole purpose of annoying the Europeans in the country. It is a deep thorn in the flesh of all foreign residents in Afghanistan. Nasrullah was reported to have been imprisoned by his nephew in later years, so he got his just deserts.)

Kawus would be a bad man if he had the requisite courage, but he always plays safe. He sometimes has a difficult role to play, and when cornered will smile with rapturous innocence and state, "I am only the interpreter. I know nothing. I can only say what I am told to say." It was rumored that he is wanted by the police in India for murder, and that this was his reason for emigrating to Afghanistan.

Once Kawus discussed his wives. He said that he had three: the first was Afghan, the second Hazara, and the third of Persian extraction. He announced that he was going to marry a fourth (the limit allowable), and that she was to be Turkish. When questioned as to the reason for so many nationalities, he said that they got along better than if they were all of one kind, and he thought it nicer to have a variety. No orthodox Mussalman would mention his womenfolk (much less discuss them), but Kawus is not very orthodox except of necessity. He is, moreover, fond of whiskey, which no good Mussalman touches.

And that brings us to Safaraj Khan, kotwal of the Kohistan district north of Kabul, the chief henchman or jackal of the mustofi. He wears English-cut clothes under a Kohistan homespun chapan in winter, high leather boots, and a cotton lungi or turban. His eyes are shifty, his front teeth are gone,

and when he smiles his two long yellow eyeteeth show like fangs.

The kotwal superintends thrashings, executes punishments, and collects fines. He does the mustofi's bidding, is the law in Kohistan, and has a reputation for underhand dealings. The people cringe and fawn upon him because of his power to harm them, but as soon as his back is turned they call him "sag adam" ("dog man") and other unlovely names. He is a known thief and a liar, and the biggest scoundrel in the country when the mustofi is away. A prominent Kohistani, after mentioning the kotwal's salary, was asked how much he thought he stole. "God knows!" was his answer, made with an expressive gesture with his hands.

The bodyguard of the kotwal, Sa'eed Khel, follows his master like a shadow. The kotwal is never seen riding through the outlying districts of Kabul without his guard trotting along behind him on foot. This servant could undoubtedly tell tales of cruelties witnessed and performed that would be hard to bear.

Most Afghan officials keep a guard constantly during the day; their doors are locked and heavily guarded by night. The fear of assassination must be always with them, but this is part of living and of the day's work in Afghanistan. They know no other state, and after taking precautions usually go on their way without too much concern.

The Light of the Nation and the Faith

HIS Majesty, Siraj-ul-Millat-i-Waddin (Light of the Nation and the Faith), G.C.B., G.C.M.G., King of Afghanistan and Its Dependencies, is entitled to a salute of twenty-one guns when in British territory. The Amir had been made Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, and has added a few decorations himself.

When His Majesty went to India in 1907, the first and only time he was ever outside of Afghanistan, the British entertained him royally. He met Lord Curzon and Lord Kitchener, commander in chief of the Indian army, who gave a dinner in his honor, presided at the Amir's initiation into the Masonic order, and won his deepest respect. He was feted and dined, taken about India on special trains and shown public buildings, manufactories, shops, battleships, guns, and troops — especially the latter. There were maneuvers for the Amir's entertainment. On one occasion a troop of lancers with their lances set galloped directly toward the Amir. His Majesty scrambled out of his chair. He thought they might not be able to stop in time — and then you never can tell, especially if you are an Amir.

Since in the Amir's country women are kept in rigid seclusion, there was some concern over what would be proper for his entertainment. Ladies invited to one dinner party were instructed not to appear in the usual low-cut gowns, which the Amir might consider improper. But when His Majesty heard of it, he declined to attend unless they appeared in evening dress. Instead of taking to dinner the lady assigned to him, he always insisted on choosing the one he preferred.

When the electric lights went out he made inquiries, and then proposed having the man in charge sent for and beaten.

The Amir had a fine time. Special trains and escorts waited while he made purchases in stores, talked to the pretty shop girls, and made them presents. Once an officer got tired of waiting to see him off at a railway station and sent the escort back to the barracks.

Finally in Lahore, where he paused to address the Mohammedans before leaving India, Habibullah announced his response to these influences in a solemn and dramatic warning against ignorance. "For I do not hold with those who urge Mohammedans to close their minds against western philosophy and science as if they were evil. But rather, I say to you, O my brothers, seek knowledge wherever it may be found."

Since that time he has had his head full of all sorts of western ideas. I believe that his being feted and pampered so much has spoiled him.

Every place he goes he builds a "palace" of mud or brick, covered with a corrugated sheet iron roof. He has added an extension to Abdur Rahman's palace in Jalalabad; spoiled the appearance of it entirely. Last year he finished a new palace of his own here, the Siraj-ul-Imarat, which we call the white elephant. In Kabul, an addition to his star palace was started last fall, and the main palace, begun in 1900, is nearing completion. The Koti-dil-Kusha ("the building that expands the heart"), this square two-story building of brick and stone, is useless and as ugly as a barn. It could be built for thirty thousand dollars easily, but has been a source of graft for Europeans and natives for years. The cost is estimated at ten lakhs, or a million dollars. All this for one man, and he doesn't go near some of his palaces one day a year.

There are the fort and palace at Jabal-us-Siraj, under construction for ten years. This is about finished — it may be two

years more or when the man in charge of the building dies. They have had from fifteen hundred to three thousand men (forced labor) working there for years. Forced labor is always another prolific source of graft. First they send out armed guards for the men who will pay to get off; then they force others to come. After a week or two, they go and milk the first lot again.

Then there are the roads, "made for the people," for his motorcar, and for the Afghan Motor Company with its thirty-seaters and big vans. According to the English papers, its purpose is to haul freight to Kabul and to return to India with the trucks loaded with Afghan exports. "What a large saving it will be over the old way of camel transport!" The Amir made a speech along these lines to his people, asking them to invest in the new company. He spoke of profits bound to accrue and suggested that some should put in thirty thousand rupees, others twenty, and so on. H.M.'s suggestions are equivalent to orders, so naturally all his faithful retainers invested stock in the company. The motor trucks, emblazoned with the legend, "Afghan Motor Company," in letters that could be seen a mile away, were purchased and brought to Kabul. But not a pound of freight has ever been hauled by the company for the benefit of the stockholders. These trucks have been used exclusively for carting the royal haram or the ghulam bachas and their baggage around Afghanistan. His Majesty also commandeers any private car he wants — the chancellor's or even his own sons'. In the ...

I plee was som the Amir once to let a truck go to Peshawar fo ainmen e gate which was holding up important work. Three n not s would have been saved if the plan had gone through, but someone made the unhappy suggestion that the machinery might scratch the paint on the truck. The gate and the work had to wait for the elephants.

There are the machine shops where very little useful work

is done—mostly repairs and gimcracks for H.M., and a few rifles; no one knows just how many, and there would be no way of getting at the cost. The general in charge is amassing wealth.

No European has been connected with the shops for some time. The Afghans seldom make good workmen; one man will be a filer, another a hammer man, and so on—they can do nothing else. The master mechanics and best workmen are imported from India. I had one of their Indian mistris or journeymen with me for a while. My old chap was a very decent sort, but old and garrulous. I checked him for a mistake one day, and added, "You should have known better." He said, "True, Sahib, but I have been here for twenty-seven years and my brains have dried up." His two students, whom we called Dusenbritches and the Walking Corpse, had been with him twenty-one years and were still shagirds, or apprentices. They could neither file and drill straight nor take a measurement, but were master hands at shirking.

The Pashm Bafi, the woolen mills which were begun seven years ago—some of the plant was on the roads between Peshawar and Kabul five years—could have been completed in eighteen months. The machinery was installed by Miller, one of the most decent men who ever got into the Amir's service. He was kept busy playing golf and making photos, and didn't dare say "woolen mills" to H.M. for fear of making him cross. Miller wants to leave now. This year he asked H.M. which it was to be—golf or the mills—and even declined to play golf. The mills were started last November and they are trying to break in Afghans. H.M. has been to one of his kotis within a stone's throw of the mills several times since they were started, but never went near them. "I'll go and see them next year." That's the way with everything. He can't hold an interest in anything for more than a week, unless it is something to amuse him.

Early in the Amir's reign, western influences began to

creep into his isolated kingdom. Fountain pens, European clothes for the satellites of the court, and a few motorcars made their appearance. The boot factory and Kabul woolen mills were started. Then in 1910 came the installation of the telephone line from Kabul to Jalalabad; arrangements were completed in 1911 for the construction of the hydroelectric plant at Jabal-us-Siraj; in 1912 the first edition of the *Siraj ul Akhbar* was printed in Kabul.

In spite of the Amir's inclination toward modern influences, he was distrustful of any progressive political or educational institutions. There were definite limits beyond which he would not go, for suspicion and lack of faith in his own people made reform impossible. He has remained the absolute Amir.

Before my time, there was in the employ of the Amir an English-speaking doctor by the name of Abdul Ghani, an educated Indian Muslim. The Europeans in Kabul spoke highly of him, both as a man and as a doctor, but he was accused of plotting against the Amir and was thrown into prison. More than likely the charge was fabricated by those who were jealous of him, for that method is frequently used to get rid of rivals.

Dr. Ghani tells his story in part in a book on Central Asia, written in Lahore in 1921. He was one of the chief members of a legislative council drawn up by the Amir shortly after the beginning of his reign with His Majesty's brother, Nasrullah Khan, as president. Abdul Ghani states: "For a few months it worked regularly, but gradually motives began to be attributed to members for insistence on their own views. His Majesty's mind was prejudiced, and the council was dissolved before it completed its first year." Soon afterward the Amir organized a council of nobles, which was convened when he wanted advice on special matters.

Educational reform ended abruptly in the same manner. An arts school for general instruction had been established

in Kabul, and primary schools formed under mullahs in sixty mosques of the city. But this enterprise was forcefully checked. Abdul Ghani, the director of education, and others were suspected of scheming against the government. In 1909 several Afghans were put to death, and the director of education, the chief inspector of schools, and the headmaster of Habeebiya School were imprisoned along with many of their supporters. For more than ten years they were confined as prisoners. The schools were left to their own fate and soon declined.

While in prison, Abdul Ghani wrote a prescription for the child of his guard, who was ill. Although it was proved to be merely a prescription, the guard who was seen to take the paper was blown from the gun. There were rumors afloat that Dr. Ghani had died, that he had been killed in prison, and, again, that he was engaged in translating the Koran into Persian.

Once when I was in the house of one of the Europeans in Kabul, an Afghan brought a message from Dr. Ghani. Written in English, it said the bearer was to be trusted. There was little in the note except a request that a century (meaning a hundred rupees) be sent to his wife. The note was burned in the grate. Even the Europeans never spoke his name, but referred to him as "A.G." I think it was in September 1912 that Dr. Ghani's twelve-year-old son was found lying in the street in Kabul one morning with his throat cut and a bayonet thrust through his head.

After that nothing was heard of the doctor, and it was generally supposed that he was dead. However, the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore contained a short paragraph on April 29, 1919, saying that Habibullah's successor, Amanullah Khan, had released Dr. Ghani from prison, declaring him innocent of conspiracy. The others were freed in the same manner.

Waiting for Leave

Jalalabad, 10 January 1914
The Year of the Cow

IN THE Name of Allah! We got away the morning of the twenty-ninth, four of us and about eighty yabus. Quite a caravan with the guard and all. It takes a lot of language to load eighty yabus, but there were only two or three fights. The first day we reached Butkhak; then after a double march over the Lattaband to get out of the cold, we made easy marches and arrived here on the fourth of January.

We are stopping just outside the town in a new sarai, a sort of mud fort with twelve little compartments inside it, each with a small compound and kitchen, absolutely enclosed. Here we shall stay for weeks, maybe months, waiting for His Gracious Goodness to graciously grant us leave to go to India for two months' vacation. He's had another row with the boss queen this year and has gone off to a place in Kafiristan for a week's shooting and fishing. By the way, there have been nine little princes and princesses born to him this year. He has passed the hundred mark. His wives, concubines, and slave girls are estimated from six hundred to one thousand—he wouldn't know just how many himself.

When His Majesty was motoring down from Kabul to Jalalabad this year, he found portions of the road lumpy. Near Jagdalak he passed some fifty men working on the road, in charge of an old man with a long gray beard. They lined up and saluted as the car passed, and the Amir motioned for them to follow him up to the koti. This they did at double-quick time, for they expected to be rewarded with baksheesh.

The Amir got out of his car and berated the old man vio-

lently. "Pig! Your father be cursed!" he shouted. His Majesty has a foul tongue and the rest is unprintable.

"Seize his beard! Knock him down!" he cried to his followers. The order was carried out promptly. "Pull him up! Lay on!" The old man was dragged up by his beard and given a thrashing.

A certain captain who happened to be stationed there laid on with a will, seemed to enjoy belaboring the old man. When he straightened up, the Amir recognized him and shouted, "Oh! I want you, too. Stretch him out!" And the military gentleman was thrown to the ground and beaten. "He is not feeling it. Strip off his coat!" ordered His Majesty.

Then the khansaman was called up for the same treatment. At last the Amir, still seething with anger, took a turn up and down. "God willing," he thundered, "the roads will be in better shape when I pass this way again." And with great dignity he strode back to his car.

Once in Kohistan he came to a temporary ditch which had been cut across the road to irrigate a piece of land on the other side. He made his sardars fill the ditch with stones so the car could cross, and fined the head malik of the district ten thousand rupees. Now if news is received that the Amir is coming, there is a great scurrying to clean the road, pick off the small stones, and sprinkle it by throwing on water with shovels from the ditch alongside.

When the Amir was in India in 1907, among other things the British presented him with two handsome motorcars, which he took back to Kabul with him by way of Kandahar. A typical Afghan road is not conducive to pleasant motoring, and the Amir's virgin tour over his own bad roads started road-building in Afghanistan. There is now a new road from the Khyber, and from Kabul up into Kohistan as far as Charikar and from Charikar to Jabal-us-Siraj. There is one from Quetta to Kandahar and from Kandahar to Kabul via Ghazni, and another from Kabul to Herat. Across

the Nilu, Salang, and Ghorband rivers are three new bridges, seventy-five-foot single spans, and a modern iron bridge, a single span also but longer by about 150 feet, has been built just above Jalalabad on a branch of the Kabul River. A few branch roads have been made suitable for motoring. The climate is a dry one, and for this reason, although the roads are for the most part made of soil, they can be, and are, built over and kept in fair shape.

It is said that the Amir employed five thousand sappers and miners, mostly Hazaras, on the building of roads, but when I first came to Afghanistan in 1911 he was having difficulty in collecting as many as five hundred men. Most of them had run away, and the people in the districts through which the road passed were being impressed to work on them. The Afghans generally had become very tired of road-building. Some of my sappers and miners from the Kandahar district told me that they were enlisted for a short time, but had not seen their families for twenty years. Mine ran away too; some were caught and brought back, and others came back of their own accord after a week or so — said they just went round and round, had no money, and could get nowhere.

Now I'll tell you how rupees are coined out of this road work. The officers of the sappers and miners grafted their pay, but there were other ways of making money. For instance, the ashikaqassi mulki, the secretary of the kingdom or home secretary, would call on a local malik to supply a certain number of men, and when they came this ghulam bacha would have them thrashed until they ran away. Then he would send for the malik to tell him that his quota of men was short and that he must pay a rupee a day for the absent ones. (It is the custom that if the men are not supplied money must be given instead.) The malik might say that he was a poor man who could not afford to give this money (and he couldn't), and that he would send more men to re-

place those who ran away. If he did, they would be thrashed until the rupees came. It was rupees and not men that His Excellency wanted.

Whether the men are ten or one thousand, the work road work or something else, the process is the same. We call it collecting rupees for the ashikaqassi mulki, a good-looking, English-speaking, plausible bastard, a court favorite who rides a horse better than His Majesty. He is from one of the families that Amir Abdur Rahman exiled to India. Habibullah, the present ruler, has these exiles back and his court is full of them. They are better educated (any sort of education is better than an Afghan's who has never been out of the country) and they "eat the people"—we call it graft or stealing. The Amir is surrounded by sycophants and flatterers and is blind.

The Afghan people are long-suffering, but there are getting to be a good many rifles of sorts that are not government-owned, and just as soon as a strong man comes along the country is going to blow up. The date may not be far off.

Three days after we left Kabul, the "birgat" of the Ghazni district, an assistant of the mustofi, was murdered in his house at night. It is said that he had guards about his place, but a gang of twelve to twenty armed men came, scaled the fourteen-foot compound wall with a ladder, killed the doorkeeper, and burst into the tax collector's room. They cut him into little bits; his wife and child were wounded in the melee. There was treasure in the house, but they did not loot, which is significant. This birgat has risen from nothing and has amassed great wealth. He has oppressed and "eaten the people" beyond their endurance; his enemies he has arrested. His brother just came in recently with a batch of seventy prisoners from Ghazni. An arrested man has poor show here—he may rot in jail for years, die there, and never come to trial. But the people have spoken. The murder is the talk of the court here. It has put the fear of death into

the heart of more than one government official. They say that if His Majesty does nothing and lets this pass it will be only the beginning—that his father would have had one hundred men killed for it by now. H.M. has done nothing. He thinks it is a private feud and no one dares tell him.

About two months ago there was a conspiracy against the Amir in Kabul. His Majesty had allowed the son of a cousin who was exiled in Turkestan to return to court and had made him collector of customs. He is supposed to have organized a conspiracy which was discovered. The English papers reported that eight men were blown from the gun. As a matter of fact, His Majesty ordered the supposed ringleader stoned. "You are my people," he told his followers, "and you say put him to death; therefore do the killing yourselves." He was stoned and bayoneted to death in the palace garden, for one of the Europeans was only one hundred yards from him when he was killed. Two or three more were executed, their property confiscated, and their families exiled to India.

Another version I have heard is that my friend, the chancellor of the exchequer, was jealous of this man. The mustofi was losing about two lakhs a year because he did not control the customs, and trumped up this charge of conspiracy to get rid of him. God knows! The chancellor has done worse than that. It is reported here that the chancellor, who is in Kabul, is uneasy since the killing of the birgat, and when he goes out has an escort of two hundred men. This is likely an overstatement. I got it from Azimoolah Khan, the court interpreter, who was over here the other night. He is a cheerful liar and much given to overstatement. He said the Ghazni birgat deserved all he got, cited cases of oppression and graft, and said the country was accursed of God. (Right there!) Ozy is the most Europeanized Afghan here, though that is not saying much. He's keen on getting commissions (bribes) from the Europeans. He can make or mar as he sees fit. It takes very little to put anyone across with His Majesty.

'Tis easily done and there is no possible way of remedying it. Ozy has figured in Afghan history and may do so again.

Many things have been sold to the Amirs of Afghanistan by "European gentlemen," solely for the profit they could make on the sales. Much could not possibly be used. The godowns are full of these things. There is steel for a steel mill, there is no steel for the mill; cooperage machinery but no wood to make casks; smelting machinery and rock crushers, steam operated, besides pianos, phonographs, clocks, and once I stumbled on an electric light bath. I have seen carpets, rugs, Kashmir shawls, and embroidered work from India I would have liked to carry away. There are some rather good furs from Russia, but nothing exceptional, though the Afghans have absurd ideas of their value.

I know that the Amir disposed of a lot of Astrakhan pelts from the royal godowns, furs which were pretty well picked over and not very desirable, by selling them to the members of his court at fixed prices. He told his courtiers that if they loved him they would buy the pelts. Of course they all loved him. His Majesty has generous fits, but is ordinarily penurious—there are tales of his auctioning off his old socks.

Once a havildar opened some bales and yakdans to show me a lot of things that had belonged to Amir Abdur Rahman—embroidered coats that he had worn, silks, rugs, Kashmir shawls that would be priceless now. There are tons of this rubbish in the godowns, all that usually surrounds an Oriental potentate plus a few extras, sold at a handsome profit—lakhs' worth—while thousands of his subjects have barely enough to live on. It has just been stored away till finally the moths get it, or as my head man told me, "till it dies."

The Europeans who have been in this country have not been all that could be desired. An Englishman who was here in Abdur Rahman's time and put up the machine shops got drunk in Peshawar when he left and boasted that he had made seventy-nine thousand pounds sterling.

Of two agents sent to the Amir by a motorcar company,

the first got drunk with the king's cook the night before he left, lost himself, and was found at three in the morning in the machine-shop gardens, lying on the ground fast asleep, his horse grazing nearby. He had been sick all over his room, which looked like a pig's. This "gentleman" returned to India, and in a published interview for the Bombay *Times* told what dirty people the Afghans were. The second man His Majesty caught lying. They were both utterly unprincipled. Discussing them one day, the Amir said to me, "First they send me a pig, and now they send me a liar." He did not overstate the cases.

There are three men here now who have gathered in about one lakh (one hundred thousand dollars) each in salary and "commissions." They want more. Just as soon as they think the cow is dry, they will go on leave and forget to come back.

The firm that got me out here paid 10 percent of their contract price to a Parsee for recommending them to the Amir. This amounted to one lakh in kalladar rupees. They also gave a bribe of twenty-five hundred rupees to the Afghan agent and postmaster at Peshawar. Their profit on the plant material supplied was 66 2/3 percent of the contract price—1,100,000 rupees. Now they are quibbling over replacing some spoiled apparatus that arrived at rail-end out of the cases, due to insufficient packing. I wrote to H.M. advising him to demand replacement free of charge, and sent them a copy of the letter.

The irony of it all is that the biggest cheat is likely to be most in the royal favor, partly because of his liberal bribing. There is one man here now who has done absolutely nothing but play golf and amuse H.M. for the last ten months. He's trying to get a big order for mining machinery. The other Europeans say that if he gets it he won't be seen here again. He's given Oz a retainer of one hundred dollars. Oz would recommend underground railways if he could get a commission.

H.M. is a lot to blame for the way he allows himself to be done, but he started with the idea that Europeans would deal squarely with him and that it was not kingly to bargain. That's gone now. Of course, he could get a representative of the British government to investigate firms and prices for him, or he could deposit in an Indian bank and have the bank pay on receipt of goods as ordered and in good condition. I have suggested the latter. It would stop the scandal of Europeans running away with money given to them to make purchases. But he won't; he's afraid of banks. Afghans are so afraid of everything that they lay themselves wide open to adventurers and budmashes.

All his own people steal with both hands from him as well. He's had jewelry caskets stolen from the table beside his bed and things taken from his motorcar. A man has to wear all his clothes winter and summer to keep them. An Afghan will kill for five cents' worth of loot and will risk his life for a rusty nail. Most of the people near Jabal-us-Siraj have absolutely nothing to eat but dried mulberries in the fall and winter; many of them suffer from malnutrition. There is not much in life for the common people, and they hold it cheap.

Jalalabad, 16 January

Now His Majesty has gone to Lultanpur, about four miles from here, where he has had an engine installed to pump water on a hill sixty feet high and five hundred feet in circumference. He's going to terrace the hill and plant a garden on top.

I've been idling here making prints from my negatives; used up all my paper, then took to reading. Miller comes over in the evening and we play bridge. This has gone on for two weeks, but I hear we are going to get leave. H.M. wants our quarters for some of the ladies. Otherwise we might have stayed here indefinitely.

19 January

Several days ago Oz reported, "I have made out the firmans for leave and pay; everything is all finished. You can go." The day after, my khazanadar informed me that the muin-us-sultana (H.M.'s son) had a pain in his head and would sign the firmans tomorrow, inshallah. He was in the haram and wouldn't come out to sign his name. And the next day old cross-eyed Daud Isa Khan found the treasury empty. Oz says he will get H.M. to give an order on his own private money.

Azimoolah was more concerned about a letter from a British Indian firm. It seems that the Amir's tailor I met in Jalalabad last year finally reached India, after being detained for six months without pay. He had taken orders from the Amir though, so his firm wrote that they had deducted Taylor's salary from the money received, and on replacement of that amount would send the balance of goods. The interpreter said this was not fair on the part of the Bombay tailoring company.

23 January

The firmans were signed yesterday, and our money was due at eight this morning. Daud Isa came at eleven. I got paid to the end of February before I left Kabul, but I got another month's pay for my hard work here, up to the end of March, which includes my leave. Halliday and Miller are both sending about forty thousand rupees down by me; we shall have near a lakh.

That reminds me. Halliday had a balance of about twelve thousand rupees that didn't come with the rest yesterday. He sent his man, Mulla Aslah u Din, an Afghan foreman, to the treasury, a distance of about half a mile, to wait and bring the money. We were playing bridge in the evening when Mulla burst into the room, went down on his knees, and dumped eight hundred sovereigns out on the floor. Had them tied up in his kamarband. Mulla was trembling and

chattery, for, as he said, if it had been suspected he had that amount with him his throat would have been cut before he reached us. We all counted the sovereigns, and after they were tied in a handkerchief, I chucked them into one of my trunks to take down to India with the others.

Fennell, who has been H.M.'s motor driver for seven years without leave, has four months, and is going to England to be operated on for ulcers. He intends to return for three years — must be worth thirty or forty thousand dollars, with his salary of one thousand rupees per month and commissions. Don't think I would go back — but some people are very hungry. H.M. gave him one hundred sovereigns as a present when he was leaving.

Turki (he has been with me in the capacity of slave driver — that's nearest to it) came to me yesterday to say we could easily do with less yabus than the firman provided. Would I permit him to make a little money for himself? He needed it to pay his fare to Bombay. I told him I'd only sign for the number of yabus supplied, but he will work it somehow.

He has asked me to get the chancellor to send him with me as my mehmandar to Peshawar, for he wants to see the outside world. I'm curious to know what the barbarian will do when he does see something — railway trains, steamboats, and a real city. I told him that if he behaved I'd take him to Bombay as my servant. He is a khas up here — had to leave Turkestan for something, I don't know what. He doesn't say his prayers regularly or fast during Ruza, and I think he is a bad Mussalman. His name is really Mohammad Ismail (Khan), but there are so many M'd Ismails 'tis easier to call him "Turki" (from Turkestan).

This narrative has been written at odd times with many interruptions. I've been afraid to read it over. Turki just reported that he has impounded sufficient yabus, so by eight tomorrow morning we shall be on the road. Now we will have to do a double march tomorrow in order to make the pass on Tuesday.

The Punjab Banking Company, Limited

10 February 1914

WE GOT away on January 24, four of us, Crawford, Kelly, Fennell, and I. The first day we made a double march to Basawal, where we pitched our tent on the roof. The sarai is dirty and congested, but H.M.'s orders are that no one shall stop outside. It isn't safe—many thieves and budmashes around. This is about the worst place on the way. The Amir's hukm states that Europeans shall stop only at the regular government sarais on certain portions of the road, and that they remain inside the walls at night. Parts of the road are considered none too safe for travelers. Members of the Amir's own household are sometimes held up on the road and robbed. (When affairs reached this stage His Majesty finally thought it wise to raise the pay of the army from ten to thirteen rupees per month, and the robberies returned to normal.)

There is another route from Jalalabad, via Botti-kot. One camps out, for there is no sarai, but water from kariz is available and the village sheikh will supply chicken, eggs, and milk.

Early the following day we made Dakka, the last Afghan outpost, which is only a short march from the Khyber Pass. After tiffin, I sent the duffadar of my guard to the serang at Dakka to get permission to take pictures of a gypsy village of reed huts close by, near the left bank of the Kabul River. The serang went with us and ordered all the women indoors. The first two youngsters I pointed my camera at bolted with a howl, but when I held up a rupee and my old duffadar spoke Pushtu to them they came back. Before we got through, an old grandmother, whose face was her protection,

was bringing out babies to us. There was keen rivalry to have pictures taken, and, inshallah, to get some of the farangi's money. It seemed as though there must be some disappointments and heartburnings, but the old duffadar solved the difficulty by counting them out in batches like sheep and each bunch got a rupee to be divided among them, about the equivalent of one cent apiece. They were all very pleased.

Afghan gypsies or koochis, of which my head man estimated there were from two to three lakhs in Afghanistan, roam from the Oxus to the Indus, seeking food for their sheep and goats. They work in the fields as laborers, travel from place to place gathering the harvest, feeding their flocks in the stubble fields and waste places, and selling milk, curds, and cheese. The cheese has a very good flavor—you have to peel off about a quarter of an inch, and even then come in contact with an occasional goat's hair or twig, but you do not mind things like that in Afghanistan.

These gypsies are the most virtuous, honest, energetic people in the country and are hardier than the Afghans who live in towns or villages; the outdoor life and better nourishment would make them so. Their wealth consists of sheep, goats, maybe a few cows, a sheep dog or two—ugly customers akin to the Tibetan breed—and generally a few camels and donkeys to transport tents and household goods.

I have seen koochis in the Ghorband Pass, trekking down to Kohistan whence they would go to India in a few weeks to escape the winter; koochis trailing across Kohistan with their flocks—camels, donkeys, and cows all used as pack animals; the "black tent" koochis at home in the pass between the mountains, Gusfand Rah (Sheep's Road), about halfway between Jabal-us-Siraj and Kabul.

These nomads live in the black tents of the Arab, or if they remain in one place long near a river, build themselves huts made of woven reeds. They are very hospitable and

always offer milk and curds, for which they will take no pay. But it is not wise to take pictures of them, especially the women. The ones I have obtained were generally through the good offices of my guard or some Afghan friend of the better class. A few rupees judiciously distributed among the youngsters, or pictures exhibited of someone else, were always a great help.

The women are not veiled as other Afghan women are. Their dress is a patchwork of rags. It seems to be the style to make clothes of patches, for on the rare occasions when I saw new cloth it was patched together too. They all affect long trousers, about a foot too long and consequently ragged and dirty at the bottoms. Although the women and children are generally festooned with silver coins, there is nothing else ornamental about their clothing. Some of them have a fair amount of wealth, but they never show it in their dress or equipment. A display of wealth in this country would be foolish. The Afghans have a saying: "If a man goes on a journey with a purse, and looks upon everyone he meets as a thief, he may arrive at his journey's end still in possession of his purse."

When we returned, some Afghan youngsters were playing a game of pitch and toss outside the sarai. I motioned to throw the ball to me, and had started a game beneath the guest-room windows when an old gray-whiskered mullah made them stop, likely told them it was not good to have anything to do with unbelievers. They all cleared off, but came back as soon as he was gone.

We reached Landi Kotal by noon the third day. Captain Campbell invited us up to the officers' mess for dinner, so we scrambled into evening clothes and went to the fort under guard. I asked permission to go ahead of the kafila in the morning, but Captain Campbell said it was not safe. There had been a raid in the pass itself a few days before. Our pack animals had to stay with the guard and the rest of the

kafila, but we could go on ahead. We arranged for five tongas and loaded the loot into them. I went in the first, put Kelly in the middle one, and Crawford brought up the rear. Fennell went along with the kafila.

We left at eight, and by the kind will of God did the thirty miles to Peshawar by noon. Went straight to the bank, dumped our loads, and worked until dark counting rupees. I had about fifty thousand—mine and others. The other fellows had nearly as much between them. The bank's methods are antiquated. They weigh the rupees in a little balance scale, fifty at a time. When I left three days later they were still weighing. There's a new man in the bank (only been out from home a few months), and when we waded into the bank with our Mausers and started carrying in rupees he was flabbergasted. Kelly told him there was a man coming behind us with a lakh all in four anna bits. He swallowed it. I persuaded him to give us a back room and by a little coercion got most of my lot counted.

Fennell arrived at seven with our yabus. Try to imagine the turmoil of unloading sixty-four yabus at the hotel after dark and sorting kit. I know I was damned tired when I went to bed. Next day I wrestled with the bank some more, but the native cashier and the manager had a court case and were absent. The small assistant with the large pipe was hopeless, so I gave up and went shopping.

Turki has been ordered to return to Afghanistan—the Afghans don't like their people to stray far. Since he had managed pretty well as our mehmandar on the road, we gave him a sovereign baksheesh and a recommendation. I took him in a tumtum to a shop where I bought some vases I wanted to send back with him. Then I dropped him at the hotel. Later, my tumtum walla told me that Turki asked him for a tumtum. The walla got a friend to drive. Turki rode around for an hour or so, took the tumtum down into the Afghan quarter, and when the driver asked for the fare told

him to go to hell. That's your Afghan. I didn't see him again. My tumtum walla said he didn't know he was from Afghanistan or he would have got his fare first.

That night at ten-thirty, I had a visit from a captain of the Indian army secret service. He came in like a thief, dressed in a cape and cowl and carrying a canvas bag. He looked like the villain in a play. I have always heard that these fellows were keen, smart men, but I was disappointed. This chap had an impediment in his speech, begged pardon, stuttered, and stammered, "So kind of you to keep us." Maybe I put him off by asking some questions first, but from the simple, fool questions he asked I should not like to depend on him for my information on Afghanistan.

The Afghan agent and postmaster sent me over thirty-five stamps. The old swine has been trying to get me to sign a full sheet of closely written Persian that purported to be a receipt for two tents and two carpets. I left Peshawar next day and went to Lahore, where I spent three days with friends.

His Majesty has considered the idea of getting a man up to discuss banking with him. The Punjab Banking Company has its headquarters in Lahore, so I'm doing what I can to help it along. Had quite a talk with the president of the company and with the man he proposed to send. This man turned out to be an acquaintance.

I came on to Bombay, 250 miles on horseback plus fifteen hundred miles by rail from Kohistan. By the way, when I left Peshawar by night train, there were guards all about the station. A guard went into the train, officers and half a dozen men at each end. I heard later that the city station at Peshawar had been raided that night. There has been a lot of raiding on the N.W.F.P. lately. About a month ago they raided a railway station, killed someone, carried off the agent, a babu, and held him for ransom. I believe the government paid the ransom, although for political reasons the

papers stated that his friends did. The man has just returned. I happen to know he was taken to Afghanistan through the Khyber Pass under the British noses. He was kept at Jalalabad — was there while we were. I think there will have to be another punitive expedition before long. These border tribes will only be good for short intervals after punishment. And mind you, the Khyber Rifles, the troops on the border, are recruited from these same tribes. They are pretty true to their trust, too; few desert.

A number of recruits were enrolled from the Afridis, a small but troublesome tribe near the border. At Landi Kotal I heard a tale of one who eloped with his rifle. The officer in charge paraded the troops next morning. The Afridis were called out and told that they were a disgrace to the regiment, and that they should go and never show their faces again unless they brought back the man or the rifle. Twelve years after, one of them came into camp, saluted, and then handed over the rifle and bandolier, saying, "Sahib, we have brought back the rifle."

Another sepoy was up for promotion as a sergeant, but was declared unqualified and turned down. He deserted with his rifle, took to the hills, and started picking off officers and men of his own command. Every time he made a good bag he would send a letter into the fort asking if he had qualified yet. He killed a good number before they finally got him.

The other night at the fort, one of the officers told me that his orderly had just returned from a leave obtained to visit a sick uncle. The officer got khubber that the man had killed his two cousins while he was away — polished off a blood feud. At first when the orderly was taxed with this he denied it, but soon he saw the game was up. Then he grinned and told the whole story. When he went to visit his cousins he placed his rifle up against the wall along with theirs to disarm suspicion, and then they sat around a fire and talked.

Suddenly he pulled a pistol and shot them both. He was just quick enough, for the second one wounded him. He told where the bullets hit and all the details. Cheerful blighters! But I like them better than the brutes up my way.

Last night I dined with the Gibbs* in their palatial residence on Malabar Hill—tails, white gloves, and the rest of it. (I mention this because of the great contrast to my recent environment.) The other dinner guests were Robert Luce, who was formerly lieutenant-governor of Massachusetts, his wife, and a lady from Boston. I talked my head off and rolled home in a taxi at one in the morning, just decently sober. These people who are making their first trip around seem like babes in the jungle to me now. The weird questions they ask and the things they do!

I'm enclosing a couple of U.S. consular reports about Afghanistan, which may interest you. Partly rubbish, but not bad, considering. Some blighter in New York got hold of them and mailed them to me in Afghanistan. He enclosed twenty-one cents in U.S. stamps, and asked, "Would you kindly mail me a copy of the Kabul newspaper?" I paid sixty cents in postage on his letter, and hope my friend, Ghulam Haider, did not open and read it, for they would be sure to think I had supplied the information. I think this yarn has been spun long enough, and trust it may be of sufficient interest to pay for reading. Brought it down to India to mail —I have to return and am not looking for trouble.

I expect to be here about a week longer, then hope to get some shooting up Dehra Dun way, inshallah. Am due in Peshawar March 27. Time is flying. May your honor ever increase! May you live!

*Malcolm Couper Gibb of the Indian Civil Service was formerly collector and magistrate at Ahmedabad and at Dharwar, a commissioner of the central division and of the southern division, and a member of the legislative assembly at Bombay. (Editor's note.)

Kohistan Bound

Jabal-us-Siraj, 25 April 1914
The Year of the Leopard

THE word for caravan is always *kafila* north of the Khyber, on the route to Kohistan. Camels and caravans generally conjure up visions of hot, sandy deserts. But practically all the camel traffic through Afghanistan is in the autumn and winter, for there is a fly on the plains in the south and the Jalalabad district which kills them off in the summer months. When the camels begin to moult in the spring they are turned out to graze. There is a government order that they are not to be used during this period.

We left Peshawar on March 31, and arrived at Fort Landi Kotal that evening. It is customary to procure gari keshes for they are much better than sarkari, the government carriers. The gari keshes, being dependent on their animals for a living, make an effort to feed and care for them, but many of the government animals are starved until they cannot carry a load. It is often preferable to start off the pack animals ahead with the mehmandar the day before the pass is officially open, leaving the following day in a tonga or motor and catching up with the transport at Landi Kotal. If the road and times are dangerous the Amir often supplies a double guard equipped with rifles and swords. When rifles are carried they generally have the breeches tied up and the muzzle plugged, so that it would take them a minute or two to get into action. Sometimes they carry only swords. One's real safety—such as it is—lies in being under the Amir's protection.

Captain Campbell very kindly invited us to dine at the fort. The kafila overflowed the sarai, and when the orderly

came for us that evening, we had to pick our way through camels and campfires inside the enclosure and wade through acres of sheep outside. Their herders were asleep on the ground among the sheep. A guard playfully poked the muzzle of his rifle in the face of one of the sleepers, but he did not even trouble to wake up—too tired!

Wednesday we made Dakka—Thursday Basawal, where our yabus fought during the night. We lost one which had to be killed by the duffadar; since it is legal to kill an animal for food by cutting its throat, his flesh was edible and the hide, of course, was saved.

Basawal is considered one of the dangerous points on the route. We left there with eight extra guards, the Mohmands across the river being on the warpath. Afghans have a saying that the near side of the river belongs to the Amir in the daytime and to the Mohmands at night, when they lie in wait for unwary travelers.

These new guards tired in about an hour's march and started back, but the mehmandar, after much language, got them to go on. They deserted a half hour later. Just before we reached Girdi-kaj we met a bunch of about twenty Pathans, apparently all with their knives in their hands; looked as though they were out for a bit of sport. One of them greeted my bearer. Earlier at Dakka, some five hundred men who were marching ahead of the kafila tried to rush the customs. There were the makings of a ruction, but it did not come off. We noted a total absence of the usual greetings from the people we passed on the road. Arrived at Girdi-kaj early and took a swim in the Kabul River—under guard.

On Saturday we got into Jalalabad, where word was sent that we were to go on to Kabul. H.M. would see me there. Sunday we made Bauli. 'Twas raining. H.M.'s koti was filled with ladies, so we had to go to the sarai. This was six inches deep in mud, and there was only one room available, which had a hole in the roof. When I told the mehmandar

that I did not think it would be H.M.'s wish to have us stop in such a place, he did some phoning. We were told to go to the koti at Bauli in the morning, and stay a day to let the ladies get ahead of us. The rain continued all the next day, so it was well we stopped, only the ladies of the haram got hung up at Nimlah. On the seventh we waited, then made a double march ahead of them, going on past Nimlah to Surkhpul.

We made Jagdalak on the eighth, and on the ninth Barikab. Then finding some of our yabus were lame, we kept on the road to Khakijabar, at the top of the pass, instead of taking the Lattaband. This was the tenth. We heard that H.M. was coming through the next day, so we got out at four in the morning, intending to go right through to Kabul ahead of him. There were sowars stationed all along the road. In the morning we arrived at the Khurd Kabul gorge. Here two sowars and a man with a tin sword informed us that they had orders to let no one enter the gorge until H.M. and his party passed. Our mehmandar and the guard explained that we could be through the gorge in an hour and that H.M. could not possibly get there under three. No good. "Hukm nist," and they held the pass. We outspanned and waited there for five solid hours. H.M. waved to us when he went by.

This delay caused us to stop at Butkhak, with Kabul only six krohs away. Got caught in the rain, too. Of course, if H.M. had known he would have passed us through.

On the road, particularly in the wake of the Amir's party, I counted thirty-seven dead camels and yabus—starved and broken down. If anything happens to a government camel or yabu the driver must wait for it to die and then return the skin to Kabul as part proof that the animal was not killed. Otherwise many uninjured ones would have their throats cut and their flesh eaten on the way.

The following day we arrived in Kabul at eleven, in time

for tiffin with Miller. Later we went to our old stamping ground at Baber, where we stuck until I got orders on the twentieth to go to Jabal-us-Siraj. H.M. has been playing golf since he arrived in Kabul; now he is busy shooting. How he loves work! However, he has read all my letters. My sarishtadar says that H.M. has very kindly sanctioned everything and has inquired when he should come out to see the work, all of which is very satisfactory.

We were three days on the road from Kabul. When we stopped at Khaja Babu's, my friend, Mahmud Jan (aged six), hiked out into the fields and gathered flowers. In the spring the country is very pretty and green. The apple, pear, and quince trees are in bloom, the grain fields are full of tulips and harebells, and even the barren dasht and mountain sides are covered with crocuses, tulips, dandelions, and many other blossoms for a few short weeks.

His Majesty passed us again on the road near Karabagh when he, the muin-us-sultana, and six carloads motored to Charikar (about ten miles from the old fort) "to look at the flowers." The foot of the mountains there is purple with a flowering shrub which they call arghavan. Sometimes the Amir and the whole court ride out and camp near Istalif, where the whole mountainside is covered with a purple haze of bloom.

The one redeeming feature I can think of is that these people are fond of flowers. The wealthy have gulkhanas with glass sides. The Amir has potted plants all about the palaces and beds of flowers on the grounds. The poorer people cultivate them, too. Even a guard stationed at some post will plant a few flowers and tend them carefully. An Afghan will carry an orange or an apple around for hours, just to smell it.

He is fond of birds also, and if he uses a falcon for hunting will take great care of it, often carrying the hooded bird around on his wrist. One hardly ever sees a family on the move without a number of bird cages in the procession. Af-

ghans even take them on picnics, where they sit around listening to the birds, feeding them, and talking to them. I have seen my guard ride for hours holding out a bird cage in one hand, though he could not be induced to carry a lantern.

In the name of Allah! Peace be unto you—may you live! Here we are again in the little room in the southwest tower of the old fort. When we arrived at Jabal-us-Siraj some of my students ran to meet me, called out greetings, seized my hand, and rubbed it with their foreheads. His Majesty has raised the pay of the students and workmen I recommended—they were not good by our standards, but some can always be recommended as better than others. The students all came up to my room, where they helped fetch and carry and lay carpets, and even made the bed. My new boy, who is a bit slow, was rather swamped.

We got in ahead of the transport, and after partaking of a lunch that I had in my pocket, I went down and had a look around the powerhouse. There was a rumor circulating at Jalalabad when we came through that it had been washed away by a flood—"the river rose five hundred feet." My men say that the water rose higher than in the memory of the oldest inhabitant. There evidently had been a bit of flood. It broke the banks and filled up about four hundred feet of the lower end of the tailrace, forming a bar of gravel and sand. A temporary bund at the dam site was washed away, but the part of the dam we put in held. My friend the mustofi did some good work turning the river back into its channel again; otherwise, there might have been some damage done. There is a chance that the bund was breached; I am accepting their word that it was not.

We started in to work with ninety-seven suffering miners and a hukm for as many locals as required. They are gathering them in. An old man I had last year, one of the two elephant guards and the best of the bunch, followed along

from Kabul and just came to my room with a tale of woe. My old duffadar, fat old shaitan that he is, tried to get rid of this man, thinking he might get ahead of his son. Last year he replaced two of my men with his son and brother. He probably thought I believed the lies he told me at the time, but I bet when I got through with him today that he realized I knew pretty well. The dhoby who left me in the lurch last year has just been here and said he will wash my clothes if I give him a month's pay in advance. I told him to come to my sarishtadar in the morning; if he doesn't he will be dragged up.

My sarishtadar, Mirza Mohammad, is fairly husky and capable. I told His Majesty last year that he wasn't so bad, and his pay has been raised eight hundred Kabuli rupees a year. I brought him up a present of half a dozen cups and saucers; about an hour ago I got a present from him of ten pounds of country cheese, a hundredweight of rice, and two lungis, which Afghans wear cape-fashion. Mine are each about six yards by a yard wide, heavy blue cotton with a border of red silk four inches wide, and three feet of the ends are woven with stripes of silk—well made and quite pretty. Cast your bread on the waters!

I'm tired. There has been something doing every minute since I got here. Just one damned thing after another! Inshallah, we shall make a start on the substation and line this year. His Majesty kindly sanctioned the engaging of four more engineers, three of whom have been found. It was a mistake that more men were not engaged in the first place.

I am off to bed—rise at 4:45 A.M. May you live! May you not be tired!

The Past Is Past

Jabal-us-Siraj, Sha'ban 1332 A.H.
The Month of the Full Stomach

ABOUT the first of June, we had a visit from His Imperial Majesty with several hundred retainers. I had the honor of one audience of about an hour, during which I got a few orders through—he was somewhat on his dignity. When downcountry, I told Oslers that unless I got more men and a few other things I did not care to go back, as there would be little prospect of getting the work finished otherwise. This was passed along. His Majesty very kindly sanctioned more men and wrote, "We will see Mr. J. as often as we see fit," promising to help me in the future as in the past. He arranged for extra bedding and furniture to be supplied me in Kabul, and a motor to take me back and forth when required. This will save my taking a young caravan with me, as well as the loss of time on the road, and will be very good "for my comfort," too.

Our work on the powerhouse is at a standstill so far this year, for the lack of five main girders. These were promised the first thing this spring, but unfortunately when they got as far as Jalalabad they were unloaded, and the elephant carts were sent to bring up some coining machinery. H.M. explained that there were some conflicting orders given which he did not hear about until too late. Inshallah, the elephants will go back to bring the girders now. Of course, they might have been brought three years ago, but "what is past is past," and we look forward to the future only.

During the three days His Majesty stayed, we put on extra watchmen to see that his retainers did not lift anything. Does it strike you as odd? When we quit work on the canal at

night, every bit of scaffolding has to be taken down and every scrap of iron removed and put under guard in tents. Just now we are lining the canal, putting in three small girder bridges and making three falls in the canal, and when the water goes down will continue with the dam and head gates. I expect to go to Kabul this week, inshallah, to start the line and substation. The river is still up; four of us crossed on an elephant the other day and it was about all he could do to stem it. The last ten days have been windless and hot, with temperatures averaging eighty-seven degrees — it was eighty-eight in my room at midnight. We get up at four. This morning being Juma'h, I indulged in bed until five-thirty.

Since then I have had two patients, both with infected hands which had to be lanced. One hand was covered with charms, three rings, and a small piece of wood from a holy grave and was wrapped in pigeon droppings; the other was done up in cow dung. The main thing I demand is cleanliness, seeing the patients frequently to insure it and supplying the soap. Altogether, it has become a bit of a nuisance, since my reputation is increasing more than the local hakim's, but I think it is worth while from several standpoints.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 6 Ramazan 1332 A.H., The Month of the Empty Stomach and the Parched Tongue

I arrived in Kabul (Sodom) just before Ramazan. Motored in, taking a khan, my sarishtadar, guard, and servant along with all my dunnage; in fact, the car was pretty well loaded. On the way we ran down a donkey and had one puncture, but made good time otherwise.

The khan is a member of my staff and in this case is, as the title implies, one of the true nobility of Afghanistan. In the old feudal times, the khans were kings in their own castles and lords of all they could control with their followings. When the country was consolidated under one head,

those khawanin who were not killed off or exiled were given positions around the court, some sort of title, and a government salary to keep them from making trouble. The khawanin of today, most of whom own land and property of their own, are the sons of these gentlemen. About the hardest work they do is to draw their government pay.

I found that one of my assistants had arrived two weeks before. One got in that day, and the third was reported dying in Peshawar. He contracted sand-fly fever there and developed an abcess under his shoulder blade, which had to be operated on a time or two. I heard today that he is out of danger and expects to be out in three weeks, but don't know whether he will come or not. One of the others had a go of fever, too, and another man was down with congested liver. They were a sorry-looking bunch. I stayed in Kabul for ten days to get things going—it takes dynamite to start anything there.

Shortly before leaving I had an audience with H.M. The appointment was for eight and I waited till one-thirty in the afternoon, but they gave us a good lunch. Spent three hours while H.M. made out firmans for materials and men and talked of many things besides.

His Majesty mentioned Miller, who sent in his resignation from India while on leave. "It was very wrong of him," H.M. complained, stuttering quite badly, as he does at times, especially when speaking English. "The car was sent for him and he might at least have returned for one day to say goodbye."

This was very true, although I knew there was another side to it. "I think he was afraid Your Majesty might keep him here," I replied.

"But I do not force any of my own people to work for me, except, of course, those in military service," H.M. explained. "I would not keep a man who is not my subject. If Miller had died here, I would have pensioned his family." Then he

spoke of Owen, the man who eloped with two hundred and forty thousand rupees, and of Mal, who was also on the swindling game. "I am going to have no more dealings with individuals!" he declared. Can you blame him?

Miller, who was about the straightest European that has been here, had been in Afghanistan over seven years. But his health was bad, and his family wanted him to come home. Recently an aunt in Australia left him some money, enough to make him independent with what he had. The woolen mills which were started last November are doing well, turning out about three hundred yards per day. The general of the workshops has charge of them now. H.M. also gave him charge of the material for the substation—this may be an advantage, for he is a capable man and can help or not as he wishes.

One of my assistants arrived with five thousand cigarettes but forgot to bring flour and kerosene. The other is used to driving Negroes in South Africa, and I had to school him a bit. Since I have two engineers and four places to work, I have no chance to move around. This is unfortunate, for it takes a new man some time before he can stand on his own feet, even if he is a good one. My five girders came July 15—they are up and things are moving. I have to go to Kabul within the next few days, and then I am coming back to camp on my damned dam.

Once earlier in the Amir's reign, a retainer at court proposed building a dam across the Kabul River at Jalalabad, to raise the water level so that it could be deflected into irrigation ditches. He obtained permission to do so. The dam, constructed of stones, sacks of earth, and brushwood, was completed at low water, of course. The Amir, greatly pleased with the work of his engineer, ordered a gold medal struck for him, but when three days later the dam was washed out, His Majesty sent for the engineer and took his medal away.

Since the beginning of the month of Ramazan, fate has

added a reservoir to my lot. There was no way of refusing. When His Majesty suggested during my recent interview that I take over Miller's reservoir, I immediately protested that I had not enough time for my own work.

But he smiled, "This will be only like breakfast. Just look at it as you come and go."

When I looked, where there should have been one hundred men there were twenty-seven, four sound asleep, the rest of them all sitting down but three. I wrote H.M. recommending that the work be stopped so that the reservoir could be dug five feet deeper. They were flooring it with lime mortar.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 30 November 1914

I have been very busy this year, but we are nearing the end of the outside work, and did not have our first flurry of snow till last night. His Gracious Goodness is coming up to inspect my work in about ten days; then, inshallah, I'll get leave. I'm ready for it, too. Last winter I offered to forego my leave, if I could have five months this year, but His Majesty said, "There is too much work ahead." May you live!

The Brown Man's Burden

26 Muharram 1333 A.H.
25 April 1915

AFTER royal favors, the Amir granted me four months' leave on December fifteenth to return to the United States and a pass to re-enter Afghanistan. When I had said goodbye to His Majesty, he sent the court interpreter with a sack of one thousand sovereigns and instructions covering purchases he wished me to make for him. No woman bent on Monday bargains ever started out with such a formidable list—guns, rifles, powder, "pistols for the gentry"; cooking utensils, cigar lighters, flatirons and "other domestic goods"; electric sewing machines, table lamps, in fact, all kinds of "electric things for Kabul voltage and current"; mills to extract oils and juice from fruit and nuts, mills for grinding spices; machine for crimping brass and paper cartridges; riding saddle and bridle, camping furniture, including a canvas washtub; kerosene stoves; motorcar fittings, and binoculars. As an afterthought a postscript was added: "As the world is quite new and every day there are new inventions, four thousand rupees is left in Mr. Jewett's hands for him to select."

These commissions were a nuisance and I spent only half of the Amir's money. Moreover, I did not wish to bring anything which might cause unemployment in any group of His Majesty's people—as for instance, the royal carpet-sweepers. Most of my leave was spent in traveling. I cabled home from Port Said January 25, and arrived in New York three weeks later. Spent one day in Washington and then went on to California. When I returned to Afghanistan, His Majesty said that he was pleased with my purchases but was more

pleased to see me back. He had given me four months' leave and five months' pay in advance, plus the thousand pounds, and it may have occurred to him after I left that I might not return. That sort of thing has happened before.

It was the custom of the Amir, after receiving an estimate from the Europeans in his employ for plant material, to give them money and let them go on leave to purchase the material. At one time he had in his employ a Dr. Owen (at least that was one of his aliases) who was given forty-seven thousand dollars with which to purchase machinery for a soap plant in England. He eloped with the money and has not been heard of since.

Dr. Owen had claimed as a chemist to be able to distill perfumes from flowers. When the Amir proposed making a business of it, his chemist made a concoction out of some rose leaves which was practically odorless. After mixing it with some real perfume, he took it to the Amir—who was pleased. This was before my time, but an engineer whom the doctor had confided in told me the story.

The Amir had a Bombay firm send him up two more men to go on with the soap-making plant. One of these men complained to the Amir that the other was no good and had him sent away. He himself remained for three years and during that time put up the four walls of what was to be the soap plant. (My head Afghan could have done a better job in four months.) Wearing a large pith helmet, he sat in a chair and watched the masons work, when they did work; he drew a salary for three years and that was the hardest task he ever managed to do. At the end of this time he went on leave to India, took all the plans of the plant with him, and was not heard of again.

Another man, in charge of the twenty-kilowatt lighting set for the palace and several telephones, styled himself "chief engineer for the government of Afghanistan." He forced the English firm who sent him here to pay him 10

percent of all he sold, threatening to cut loose from them if they did not. But he told me that 10 percent was not enough, that he proposed to sell things on his own so he could make a lot of money. He induced the Amir to purchase a steam tractor to be used for hauling material from India to Kabul —over this road where wood is very difficult to obtain and high in price, and where there are long stretches without water. When the tractor finally arrived in Peshawar no one could get it to "tract," so the Amir told the engineer to go down and bring it up himself. After the trial the engineer concluded that it would be best not to return to Afghanistan and sent in his resignation from downcountry, an act of discretion on his part. He was an unmitigated ass, as well as the most unprincipled man up here—and that is going some. The tractor, of course, was paid for in advance. Perhaps it is now rusting in the royal godowns with abandoned phonographs, electric light baths, and rock crushers.

In India he had an interview with a Calcutta paper, in which he said he had been three years in Kabul on the hydroelectric scheme and some more rubbish. Oslers wrote to the paper and repudiated it. In the Kabul paper, the *Siraj ul Akhbar*, an article was published calling him a thief. It was claimed that he had swindled the government out of fifty thousand Indian rupees. If he did not get away with that much it was no fault of his. The Amir said, "He wanted a rupee for four annas" (300 percent). Is it any wonder Afghans believe that Europeans are all shaitans?

Another of these European gentlemen came up into northern Kohistan. One day he remarked, "I'd like to sell His Majesty a cotton mill for this district."

"You couldn't think of anything more useless," I told him. "There is not enough cotton in the whole district to run the mill a week."

But he shrugged his shoulders. "Oh, I don't care a God damn about that," he admitted, "if I can sell the mill and

get the skin off of it." The skin would have been pretty thick, 200 or 300 percent.

"The more you swindle the Afghans," continued the cotton mill expert, who was fairly popular, "the better they like you." This is quite true, for his sort bribed liberally to get their schemes before His Majesty.

All these European experts called themselves engineers except the Amir's French cook, whose pay of one thousand Indian rupees was on a par with the majority of the Europeans—he was an artist. No wonder the Afghan idea of an engineer was hazy.

One day the Amir became very confidential with me and complained bitterly of the way he had been treated by some of the Europeans he had employed. "I am a king," he protested. "I cannot bargain like a shopkeeper." The Amir himself was pretty square, always in accordance with Afghan standards. He gave fair treatment, paid good prices, and expected to be dealt with fairly in return. There is also a brown man's burden.

From the Koti Setareh Enclosure

Kabul, 16 June 1915

I HAVE had my second audience with His Majesty today. Have been over at the palace since morning and am tired. First I had to wait from nine to eleven this morning, and then H.M. took me through the palace. After it was inspected and the heating of it discussed, the chancellor put through a little work. We stopped for tiffin at one o'clock and I was invited to sit at His Majesty's left hand. Soon the conversation drifted to the war. I found the Amir fully informed, holding sensible views. In connection with the recent rumpuses that the border tribes have been kicking up on the frontier, he told some of his own people who wanted to join in that if they did they need not come back. Then between two and four many things were discussed—actually a total of about half an hour on my work. I wish I had time to put down all I have seen and heard today.

I forgot to mention that I am a guest of His Majesty, who has moved me into a little house in the palace enclosure that was built for the ladies. My food is all sent over from the royal kitchen—very good picking, too—fruit, ice, and everything. But I have my hands full. I wish I had had a little to do with the engineering of this scheme in the beginning; there would have been a few, just a few, things different. But, God willing, we will get it going sometime. I expect to be here about a week longer, then will go to Jabal-us-Siraj. Sut, another assistant engineer, British-born, should be on his way out; I got a cable from him before I left India.

At the beginning of the war the Amir found his country in a grave position. Afghanistan was pro-German, and Habibullah's people, including members of his own family, want-

ed to join the Central Powers and the fighting, yet he kept the country neutral.

In the court at Kabul a strong anti-British party of sardars was led by his brother, Nasrullah Khan. His eldest son, Prince Inayatullah, the muin-us-sultana, who had a Turkish wife, was pro-German. Contrary to his father's orders he used to visit members of the German mission that was sent to Kabul in the first year of the war, meeting them in the homes of the Turkish residents of Kabul. Moreover, the mullahs and Turks were stirring up pro-Muslim sympathies.

During the fighting between the border tribes and the British, a native chieftain came to Kabul to get arms and help. He finally approached Nasrullah Khan, the naib-us-sultana, who could not give him rifles but suggested that the keys to the rifle stores were in the hands of a good Mussalman. Armed Afghans congregated in the city.

These activities were ended abruptly by the Amir. Returning from prayers in the Great Mosque, he paused dramatically on a bridge of the Kabul River to harangue the thousands who were returning with him. "Show me a place in the Koran where the faithful are advised to make war on friends," he said. "O my people! The British are my friends. I, the Light of the Nation and Faith, decree that no subject of mine shall bear arms against them."

Probably only Allah will know whether he was really loyal to the British or to the six hundred thousand dollars' subsidy that they paid him annually. Although it was supposed to be for the purpose of purchasing arms to support the army against unruly tribesmen and invaders, it served more as a bribe to keep the country quiet. Afghans speak of the subsidy as "money sent from God."

The Amir has suppressed the *Siraj ul Akhbar* twice because articles printed in it were inciting Afghanistan to go to war against the Allies. This court paper, printed in Kabul, is quite well done; besides zinographs of the palaces, groups

of officials, and many of His Majesty, there are also war pictures and cartoons. I am told these cartoons are original, but some of them seem too good for that and must be of Persian or Turkish origin. One depicted a stocky Japanese soldier standing over a Russian and a Chinese whom he had laid low with his sword. Uncle Sam was standing by with his finger to his forehead — meditating. The zinographs are made by a Turk and I think a Turk does most of the editorial work.

His Majesty's troops train on the Chaman, a field north of the city. I have seen them on many occasions. Once, after the Khost rebellion, army officers were assembled to have the exploits of General Nadir Shah read to them. Later an exhibition of gymnastic exercises was given — horizontal bars, the scaling of walls — elaborate exercises which the men seemed to enjoy as they do wrestling. After that I saw occasional field gun practices and maneuvers.

The officers wear smart uniforms and leather gaiters, and on full-dress occasions are resplendent in gorgeous uniforms covered with gold braid and crowned with plumed helmets. The army has officers galore, most of whom have little knowledge of military science, though a few Turkish officers have introduced some German practices. There is always a brass band with European instruments, who are undoubtedly the most hard-worked of the troops; they blow their heads off.

My Manda Yusufs are typical soldiers. My head man wanted to know what I meant when I used to address my guard as "Tired Tim," and the nearest I could get to it in Persian was Manda Yusuf (Tired Joseph). The name stuck; after that, even the bigar always referred to a soldier as a Manda Yusuf.

The regular army is supposed to consist of about seventy thousand, supplemented by twenty thousand irregulars. The greatest number of troops I have seen assembled at one time was twelve thousand at Kabul. The regulars are equipped with modern rifles purchased by permission of the British

and also with those of their own manufacture, made after the British pattern. They make their own ammunition, including shrapnel and their own mountain guns.

There is practically no rifle practice, and they are poor marksmen as a rule. If a soldier uses a cartridge he is charged a rupee for it, penalizing him above the market price. For a time they practiced with field guns on the Chaman, the Amir attending every Friday. The colonel of the Kabul shops, who seemed to be the only one with any skill, trained the gun at the target, and the general of the shops fired it when the signal was given.

Transport carts are few and the majority of government transport animals, bar a few mules, are always in poor condition. But Afghan troops do not need much transport; a soldier can tie up a week's ration of nan and dried mulberries in his kamarband and sleep out in the open.

One man in eight has to serve in the army, and their drilling of new recruits is an amusing sight. Try to imagine a squad with baggy trousers and turned-up toes doing the goose step! Some have coats and others none; there are ragged clothes, dirty clothes of all sorts. The men have one uniform and except for the Amir's bodyguard wear it only on parade and for special occasions — between times they wear any old coat, generally ragged, though the white cotton trousers are all pretty much alike. A dog whip is part of the drillmaster's equipment, and if the men do not drill to suit him, he uses the whip on their bare legs. There is no real discipline; a private will step out from the ranks, take a rifle from his captain, and proceed to show him how to use it. And the private is probably right.

The men will not stand much drilling. When a colonel in command of the garrison at Jabal-us-Siraj, a cousin of the Amir, got too enthusiastic about drill, the men sent word to him that if he did not let up they would kill him. Drill slackened. Once while the court and the Amir were at Jala-

labad, word came that a whole regiment of Kohistanis, who thought they were being overworked by a Turkish officer at Kabul, had thrown their rifles down on the parade ground with a shout and had gone back to their homes.

The government troops are a lazy, chillum-smoking lot, who bully and blackmail the people and add thieving to their soldiering profession. Except in the presence of the Amir they never stand when on guard. About the hardest work they do is to sit on the sheltered side of a wall, pull their shirts over their heads, and look for "shipish." It is a common sight to see them reading their shirts.

His Royal Highness, Prince Inayatullah, muin-us-sultana, has sent me the following order concerning one of my men:

4 Ramazan 1333 A.H.

RECEIVED FROM HIS HIGHNESS*

Be it known: As Smith, the tower man, was residing at Andarabi in the floor rooms of the Government House; and the upper rooms were given by Our Highness to two masters of the Habeebiya School, and Smith was not willing of the said masters being in that house, and he applied to Our Highness, as Smith's residing in Kabul was temporary. He was called in the presence of Our Highness, and ordered to give him and his wife the small rooms at the Koti Bagh, Mehman Khana. The Foreigners' Office went with him to show the rooms at Mehman Khana, but Smith did not like the rooms for his residing. After that, the firman was given to give him two rooms out of the fine rooms opposite Koti Nakashi, but he did not like these rooms also, and he was willing to live in the same house at Andarabi with the masters as he was going to Jabal-us-Siraj in a few days. At Thursday night one of the masters came down in the compound to perform ablution. Smith called on him, who was he? The master replied that I am. After the reply of the master, Smith began to

*Translated from the Persian by the interpreter at Jabal-us-Siraj. (Editor's note.)

curse and use dirty words against the rule of the master, and after cursing, he took a stick, and hit on the head of the master, and the master fell down senseless on account of the stroke. The master applied the case to Our Highness, and Smith also applied to Our Highness separately. According to the writing of the application it was known that Smith had acted against the rules, as they were called in our presence, and were tried in the presence of each other. Besides this, that Smith had acted against the rule, God forbid, he had used bad words for the God-granted Government of Afghanistan. This time deserving punishment was given to him, by Our Highness, and as you are the head of him, we inform you that you may come to know of the behavior against the rules of Mr. Smith which he had done, and of the punishment given to him by Our Highness, and you may inform him that if any movement against the rules comes out from him or from anyone, inquiries will be made and he will be fit for strong punishment.

Bearing the signature of His Royal Highness, muin-us-sultana.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 15 August 1915

I think Sut, who has been here for a couple of weeks now, will be a good assistant, though he has been a nuisance and his deafness is a handicap; one needs all the faculties here.

Ramazan is over and I'm glad of it. The whole month has been especially trying because of the long hot days. You see, it follows the lunar calendar and comes in the hottest and longest days for a few years now. I have been to Kabul twice recently; just came back. His Majesty has been sick with gout and keeping Ramazan, too, so he can do little work. But I got the elephants started off for Jalalabad to bring up the remainder of our motors — they have been over five years on the road. I only want a few more things and then I don't know of anything that can stop me from finishing here. One more year, inshallah.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 10 October

I have just returned from a three days' trip to Kabul. It seems that His Majesty is up in the mountains at Paghman with all the satellites — has been there since Ramazan, and no one can get to him with anything that spells work. He will probably come up here before cold weather. By the way, it has just turned a bit colder; the thermometer stands around seventy, about ten degrees lower than it has been.

There is not much to write about, bar a leaky roof and trouble with the servants. Since I got some potatoes in Kabul we are living high, for only a few days ago we were reduced to pumpkin and onions. I'm feeding Baker now, and Sut shifted his cook while I was in Kabul. You see we get them from down country, and they think they can do as they please because we cannot replace them, but we fool them every time. I had Baker's man started down the road twenty minutes after he balked.

One of our servants, a Pathan, got to be such a gentleman that he could do no work. Dressed up in a long coat, carrying a cane in one hand and leading a special kind of fighting goat which will fight to the death, he would set out for the bazaar, prepared to meet all comers. His pay was stopped, but instead of going downcountry he visited around on the money he had saved. We heard shortly that he had married, next that he was in chains and in jail. It seems that it is unlawful for a downcountry man, even though he be a Mussalman, to marry an Afghan. They kept him in prison for about a year, and then sent him to the border in chains. The mullah who married him was fined and punished.

For the rest, all marriage arrangements follow the Islamic code. An Afghan does not see his prospective bride till they are married. After the dot and all the preliminary formalities have been settled by the parents, there is a procession and a big feed. They burn a good deal of powder — in Kohistan the men who escort the groom dance and whirl, carry-

ing guns which they fire in all directions. Needless to add that there are often accidents and even deaths.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 22 October

My work is progressing in spite of the cholera, lack of orders, and delay in replacements. After the month of fast the cholera struck us. About 180 seizures per day in Kabul when it was at its best—50 percent deaths. The people ran away to the villages and it spread everywhere, but it is slacking up now. It was then His Majesty shifted to Paghman in the mountains. He is still there—won't read a letter or sign an order. I have not heard from him in four months. Some things he sanctioned in June are still waiting his signature to make them operative. May you live!

Letters to David Fairchild

Jabal-us-Siraj, Afghanistan, 2 July 1915

HIS Majesty was very pleased with the seeds that you had me bring out, and superintended the counting and classifying of them himself.* I assisted for about three hours in the translation—the big dictionary had to be referred to for some of the names. Field corn with large grains was put down as camel-tooth corn, and the number of grains to an ear was counted.

The album of photos of fruit trees and plants was examined. The enclosed letter of thanks was translated and read. This was the best writing "We" had ever seen, and if you looked across the paper, you could see that the lines were quite straight.

His Majesty wanted to know if the department would send an expert agriculturist out here. I thought maybe they would. H.M. is writing directly to the Department of Agriculture about this matter. I have not seen the letter, nor do I know if it has been sent, but was told that thirteen hundred rupees per month and an allowance of nineteen hundred rupees for traveling expenses will be proposed. (These are Indian or kalladar rupees, one of which equals 32.46 cents.) The usual arrangement here is two months' leave a year with full pay, and the length of time may be stated.

If you think of sending a man, he should first of all know his business thoroughly and be resourceful. He should have some dignity of presence and not be the sort to worry if he has to go without milk in his tea occasionally. I think he must know how to analyze soils, and it would be well for him to

*David Fairchild, a member of the United States Department of Agriculture in Washington, was in charge of foreign plant exploration and introduction. (Editor's note.)

know about tree and plant pests. If you do send a man, you will find how easy it is to accomplish things here!

His Majesty described four different methods of grafting mulberries and I had four kinds from the royal table. Have learned more about mulberries than I ever knew before. H.M. said that the only way to get them out of the country would be to take a young growing tree. But I have too much to do to worry about your old seeds just now.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 22 October 1915

May you be in good health! After greetings: in your esteemed favor of May 26, I note you have grown some plants from the dried mulberries I brought you. This is a surprise, for I thought that they were seedless. One can crush them with the tongue when they are ripe, and there is apparently no trace of seed, but I have been told that the first of the crop contains a few. The trees shed mulberries for six weeks to two months, and during mulberry time everyone eats them. Wherever one goes, the host brings them heaped on a tray.

I used to pick mulberries up by the short stems and eat them one or two at a time, but the natives laughed at me. The proper way is to take a handful and shoot them into the mouth with the thumb of the right hand. They are eaten stems and all; the stems are short and soft, so it is really a waste of time to remove them. I have had iced mulberries at the royal table which were very easy to eat.

There are a number of varieties, among them white, black, and brindle, many fully an inch long. One distinct kind is called the shah tut, or king mulberry. The tree has darker, heavier foliage and the fruit, which is altogether different, is dark red, quite tart, and very juicy. It is very much like the loganberry in size and form, though not so sweet. The shah tut is not dried, for there is only an occasional tree.

I should say that 90 percent of the trees in Kohistan are

mulberry trees, tens of thousands of them growing in the valley on the flat and on the terraced sides of the river banks, lining the roadsides as shade trees or thriving in narrow terraces on the hillside where the soil is chiefly gravel and boulders and is too poor for any other crop. Of course, the better the soil the better the tree and yield, although mulberries grow where nothing else will. They are all irrigated and seem to take a lot of water. The trees are planted from sixteen to twenty feet apart, but there is no regularity about it. Bear at four years, give a fair crop at six, and a full one at seven or eight, I think.

The method of gathering is simple. The ground under the tree is smoothed and cleared. When the mulberries fall they are swept up into little heaps, carried away, and spread on the roofs of the houses or on a flat space of ground in the open to finish drying. After they are dried they are stored in big earthen jars or dried mud bins.

In a season an average tree will produce ten Kabuli seers of dried mulberries. (A Kabuli seer is approximately sixteen pounds.) I have made numerous inquiries about this; twelve, sixteen, and twenty seers are claimed, but allowing for the native tendency to exaggerate, I think ten seers a fair average, though undoubtedly the best trees yield more.

Tuts are spoken of as the bread of Kohistan. They are the principal diet of many and the sole food of some. Many laborers bring several days' rations of dried tuts tied in a cloth across the small of their backs; when mealtime comes they sit down, eat a few handfuls, and take a drink of water, and the meal is finished. One of the officials here told me that when he first came, he engaged a man for our work who admitted that he and his family had not seen bread for five years. They had subsisted solely on tuts. Of course, where bread cannot be afforded, meat is out of the question. It is certain that tuts are nourishing and contain lots of sugar.

The streams are dotted with little water mills (wooden

turbines, upper and nether millstone), where the dried tuts are ground into flour. Then it is made up into hard little cakes called talkhan which look like chocolate, only lighter and coarser. I have often seen a man lay a piece of it on a boulder and take a big stone to bash it down into small chunks. An Afghan going on a week's journey will take nothing for food but a chunk of talkhan wrapped in his kamarband, and a workman coming from a long distance will carry a week's ration in the same way. Sometimes they grind up almonds with tuts and eat the flour. I have had it presented to me and have eaten it with a chip for a spoon, but this is a luxury.

Have just finished getting in my winter's wood. Mulberry trees again, twenty Kabuli rupees per karwar (1280 pounds) or about one fourth of a cent per pound. When a tree is cut down nothing is wasted. A flock of sheep or goats is driven up to eat off the leaves and every little branch, and the last root is dug up for firewood.

I am enclosing four pictures of tut trees and three negatives. The season was about over when your letter arrived, and I have no time to run around taking pictures. These were taken close by and the trees are growing on poor soil. The peach crop is not good this year; we have had too much rain, and the storms beat the blossoms off. Moreover, it would take royal help and sanction to do the collecting and classifying. I have a few local peach stones for you, which I will forward sometime. I sent to Istalif, where the best are supposed to grow, but the report came back that the crop had failed and there were none.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 1 July 1916

May you be in good health! After greetings: I received your letter of last December, and also Mr. Dorset's* letter dated September 9. The order sanctioning the engagement

*Marion Dorset was the chief of the biochemical division of the United States Department of Agriculture. (Editor's note.)

of the agriculturist was drafted, I know. When His Majesty visited us here in January, and we were walking through the garden, I pointed to some trees killed by worms. H.M. remarked, "Yes, we need someone to show us how to get rid of them." Then he turned to his secretary and asked him if the letter had been sent. He replied that it had not—probably awaiting H.M.'s signature and he must have known it.

I rather imagine that the disturbed international situation has caused the delay, or the enthusiasm may have cooled. Enthusiasms are short-lived here, as a rule. I have never broached the subject because you would not want to send a man here in these unsettled times in any case. It will be soon enough when the war is won by the Allies. I do not think there would be much gained on either side; it would take dynamite to jar them out of the rut and more dynamite to keep them going.

The only results I have seen from your seeds have been some raised by the court interpreter, who seems to have done fairly well and is sending samples around as gifts to the powers that be. Azimoolah is quite enthusiastic about them, especially his popcorn. It seems they pop ordinary corn here by roasting it over a fire in a dish full of sand. He sent some of his to the bazaar to be popped, and the man reported that it exploded and shot sand all over the place. He tells me he has grown good melons and squash, too. I hear that some of the wheat has done well in the Jalalabad district, and we may hear from other sources yet.

I had the honor of lunching with His Majesty a couple of months ago and mentioned your having grown plants from mulberry seeds. H.M. said it would not work; the only good results were obtained from grafting. You might bear in mind that I see H.M. only about four times a year, and when I do it takes me all my time to get him to do part of the arrears of my work. And furthermore, kings elect the subjects that are to be talked about and do most of the talking themselves.

It's mostly a case of speak when spoken to. You, just being an ordinary democrat, might think one could butt in any time. Again, no one but His Majesty can or will do anything. The rest are pawns. May you live! And may you not be tired!

Fed by the Snows of the Hindu Kush

Jabal-us-Siraj, 5 Safar 1334 A.H.
The Month of Rest

IN THE name of Allah! Be in good health! May you live! After greetings: this being the Month of Rest and since I have a small amount of leisure, it occurred to me that a zamindar of note might be interested in the means of subsisting here in the valleys of the kingdom.

Kohistan is an arid district; there has not been one-half inch of rain since last June. Nearly everything is under irrigation, with an extensive system of underground kariz from the many small streams which are fed by the melting snows of the Hindu Kush.

The ground is plowed with oxen, and the plow is the old-time crooked branch of a tree, the point shod with iron. The grain is cut with a sickle and is threshed by treading it out with cattle; after this it is winnowed, just as it was in the time of Moses.

Afghan wheat is mainly winter wheat, planted in the autumn; most of it is irrigated, but some, a special kind, is raised on ground that is too high or remote to be watered. Grain raised without irrigation is called salmi. If the season is too dry, the taxes are always remitted in proportion to the crop obtained.

The grain is ground in the little mills that are studded about everywhere—on streams or where there is a fall in an irrigation ditch. They generally operate under a head of eight to twelve feet, a long, hollowed-out log being used to shoot the water onto the wheel. The water wheel hub and shaft are made from a tree trunk, with wooden blades placed at an angle. The wheel operates horizontally, and the lower

end of the vertical shaft is pointed and shod with iron. The upper and nether millstones measure from three and a half to four feet in diameter; a short iron extension to the top of the shaft passes through the nether and is fastened to the upper stone, which revolves. Hundreds of these little mills are scattered about the country.

The runners of three Francis turbines, recently installed near the site of an old flour mill with its tail-water pit, each deliver 755 horsepower at a head of 130 when supplied with 3740 cubic feet of water per minute. They are smaller in diameter and make a good contrast with the Afghan water wheel. There has probably been no change in the design of these wooden wheels for a thousand years or more. They are easy to make and inexpensive, however; there is plenty of water to run them and they do the work—grind wheat, corn, and dried mulberries, and even break up bricks to use in mortar.

The Afghans supplement their scanty food with many sorts of greens. They are very fond of lettuce, which is grown everywhere. During its season one meets men of all classes walking through the streets, eating away at the small green heads. Street vendors sell kurds and also beets, which are boiled, sliced, and sold as a sort of sweetmeat. The poorer people eat raw white clover and the mulberries gathered from trees alongside the road. When we were working on the canal I have seen the kotwal eat a melon and throw the rind to the laborers in the same manner as one would throw a bone to a dog. They fought over the rinds and ate them, sand and all.

In the spring and autumn, when the wild fowl make their flights, any of them that tarry in Afghanistan have a perilous time of it. Weeks before, the natives make artificial ponds in the fields, put temporary barriers across rivers to make still backwater, and build blinds. The whole country is studded with these sheets of water covered with decoys.

There is very little game, but the Afghans are keen hunters and will shoot at anything from a sparrow to a crane—meat is meat. In the early morning about daybreak the sound of the guns is like a bombardment.

Once at a malik's house I could not make out the bird that was given me for dinner. The meat was very dark, and when I inquired afterwards I found out it was a crane. As they put it, the meat of a kulang is rather "warm." A wild duck is called a murghabi, or waterfowl. Certain foods are avoided in hot weather; others are called "cooling." The blacksmith will speak of iron that does not make a good weld as "very bitter" and good iron as "sweet."

In the grain fields there is a fine sort of quail, a sumana, which looks like a miniature partridge and will not fly where it can run and hide. Afghans drag a long rope over the tops of the grain to shoo the sumanas into a net in one corner of the field. Out on the dasht they rig up ingenious traps for them, making little runways of interwoven thorny shrubs that center in an enclosure where they keep a live bird as a decoy to call the others.

The men fish in streams using a circular net, the rim of which is weighted with chunks of lead. Working carefully upstream, they throw the net with a circular twist, and it falls over an area eight or ten feet in diameter. Then they pull the net up carefully by the center, the weighted edges dragging over the bottom till they come together. The device does not seem to be too efficient, for it takes many throws of the net before a fish is caught.

Afghan boys hunt birds with bows, using stones instead of arrows. Sometimes they carry blowguns, tubes about eight feet long, through which they blow mud pellets. When sparrows are roosting in a tree, they can occasionally bring one down. Indeed, no Afghan ever chances a wing shot; he always shoots his bird sitting.

There are certain places in the foothills where sparrows

make their flights, sweeping low over some ridge or hill, generally over hills sloping up from a river. The Afghans build blinds of stones and lie concealed behind them with long nets fastened to poles. When the sparrows fly over, the nets are jerked up suddenly before they can swerve in their flight. I have never been able to believe the tales told of the number of sparrows netted in this manner.

While in the country I have seen one hare and once or twice a fox, and have heard tales of wolves. For larger game one has to go back into the mountains.

Nearly every Kohistani has a little patch of cotton, and the family weaves its own clothes with maybe a little extra for the market. In the Deh Bala (Upper Village) and also at Jabal-us-Siraj, I have watched them weaving cotton cloth on the sheltered sides of the hills in winter. On their crude wooden frames they weave cloth ten or more inches wide. These widths are sewed together and made up into the clothing that they wear. Their cotton is poor and short-fibered, and comes from plants which are eight inches or a foot high. Women do the spinning, but the weaving is done by men — mostly in wintertime.

Some cotton seed was presented to the Amir by the United States Department of Agriculture, and he sent some of the seed to the Jalalabad district to be tried out. Not long ago I asked one of His Majesty's staff if they had had good results. He said that they had grown cotton from it, and that the samples had been sent to Kabul to be experimented with in the woolen mills there. He added, "The cotton is very long and fine, and I doubt if it can be used."

And yet, in the high-walled vineyards of Kabul and the neighboring districts the Afghans produce grapes and raisins which are famous throughout Central Asia. They are among the chief exports to India.

These raisins — the bulk of them are called kishmish — come from a variety of grapes, mainly of the seedless kind

akin to the sultana. Some are dried in the sun and others in curing rooms, usually located in the second story of square mud towers, which are loopholed and look like forts. Bunches of grapes are picked a trifle green and festooned on a network of sticks from the floor to the ceiling — every available inch is utilized. Raisins cured in this way, kishmish-i-sabz, are tender, light colored, sometimes almost translucent. They are very choice and command a higher price than the kishmish-i-surkh, the dark sun-cured red raisins. In these curing towers they keep fresh for a long time and supply fresh grapes for the market; in fact, it is really cold storage and curing combined. The price of raisins to the trade is, I believe, in the neighborhood of two cents per pound locally.

Raisins are exported in great quantities to India, where they are used in Christmas puddings. It is said that *kishmish* is derived from "Christmas," being the Indian servant's nearest approach to the pronunciation of the word — and that is the reason raisins are called kishmish in Afghanistan.

There are numerous kinds of grapes in Afghanistan. Among the very choice is a white grape, olive shaped and about an inch and a quarter long, called the husaini, which keeps fresh for a long time. The grapes are packed in cotton wool and kept in godowns with thick mud walls, which are cool in summer and keep out the cold in winter. In very cold weather a lamp is placed in the room to keep them from freezing. Afghans claim they can be kept fresh till a new crop comes in. I have eaten them from July to February and even March.

The mustofi has some choice grapes in his compound in Kabul, with little cotton bags tied over the bunches on the vines to keep the wasps from eating them. Most of the vineyards are surrounded with high mud walls, which are crowned with thorny bushes. When I was surveying, I gained quite a little respect for this means of protection.

There are black grapes, purple grapes, and other varieties

of white grapes. Their Afghan names would make it difficult to identify them to one not familiar with the different varieties. Fresh grapes are transported to India in cotton wool, usually packed for shipment by placing one dish over the top of another and sealing the edges with mud. They go hundreds of miles this way on the backs of camels.

In the Kabul district about twenty miles south of here there are valleys noted for melons. There is an infinite variety of them akin to our muskmelon, kharbuzas, both "warm" and "cooling." The best are about a foot long and white or slightly yellow inside. In addition, there are watermelons, tarbuzas crossed with pumpkins, and varieties that mature late and keep well into the winter. The owner builds himself a hut in the center of his patch and lives there during the season, for melon patches have to be guarded night and day.

If you happen to be walking over dry ground through camel grass on a hot day and pass a mud-walled village, you are fortunate if the malik comes out with a basket full of tarbuzas as baksheesh. He greets you with, "May you not be tired," and when you sit down on a lump of baked clay and wade into them, they taste pretty good. Once I bought six for a Kabuli rupee—about sixteen cents in your coinage. It was a big price, but we had to have them.

The Kabul district produces grapes, raisins, mulberries, melons, and vegetables; shepherds raise fat-tailed sheep, camels, and horses; Herat in the west has some fine carpets; in the Jalalabad and Kandahar regions grow date palms, cotton, and fruits. The incoming kafilas bring mostly sugar, tea, cotton, oil, and some machinery. Fruits, vegetables, hides, and yabus are the chief exports, which go over the caravan trails to Persia, Russian Turkestan, Baluchistan, but for the most part through the Khyber to India.

Agriculture, of course, is the only important industry. The natural resources of the kingdom are undeveloped. The shops in Kabul make boots and saddles, guns and powder,

and some woolen goods. It is true that the wealth of Afghanistan is not large; the majority of the people are poor and unprogressive, burdened with heavy taxes and forced labor. May you live!

This Year Was as Much as Fifty

Jabal-us-Siraj, 1 January 1916

I HAVE been all mixed up lately. My roof got to the point where it was not safe, so I had to move out to have it replaced. Then on the tenth of December I went to Kabul to see His Majesty. He had not read a letter of mine nor had I been able to see him for nearly six months, and some of the material that is holding me up has been rotting in Peshawar. H.M. sent word that he would see me the third day after I arrived. I waited two hours at the appointed place. Then came word that if I cared to wait, God willing, he would see me as soon as he was able—or I could return and, God willing, he would come to Jabal-us-Siraj later.

I sent word that I would wait. I did, for twelve days. Finally I got an audience with him and when I spoke of the delay was told, "No good in talking about things that are past, but some new arrangement will be made for the future." I got all that was necessary.

His Majesty is an enthusiastic collector, and took pride in showing me some very interesting antiques, jades, and old armor. We sat cross-legged on the floor in front of a tall Chinese vase and discussed the workmanship, while a ring of courtiers stood around in a circle and listened. No one is privileged to sit in His Majesty's presence except his sons, two old sardars, and a very few others by special permission. He is a stickler for form and a strict disciplinarian in these matters. After our talk, His Majesty very kindly had me to lunch with him, gave me a box of cigars, and promised to come to Jabal.

On the thirtieth of December, seventeen days later, His Majesty arrived and stayed two days, leaving this afternoon.

He went over all the work from the head gates to the tail-race, and when we were in the powerhouse I asked him if he did not see quite a change from last year.

"That is not for you to talk about," he said. "That is for me to speak about."

So I changed the subject. I explained volts, amperes, and watts to him, and also the reasons for stepping up to a high voltage for transmitting to Kabul. His Majesty then explained the operation to his courtiers. He has a good memory and grasps things quickly, and he described it very clearly—though, of course, most of it was too much for them.

Just before we left the powerhouse His Majesty said, "Now I am going to talk to you about your work. I told you that I was pleased with the work last year, and it is like this—if last year was like ten, this year was as much as fifty." Then he continued, "You will send me a list of the men who have worked well. Divide it into three groups, and I will raise their pay according to their work."

I have some men who have done well, but I am afraid there will be disappointments. If they only had something in their heads! There is not one of them who for education or ability to reason could compare with your youngest, and that is no exaggeration.

Yesterday, when I rode up to the headworks with the Amir and the courtiers, I told H.M. I could show him an easy way to catch fish. Then I turned the Salang River into the power canal and left the river bed almost dry. It was fun to see them scrambling after the stranded fish; they thought it was great sport and caught about three bushels. The fish were suckers and catfish, which the Afghans call sag mahi, or dog-fish, and do not eat. These are the only kinds of fish found in the rivers in this part of the country.

His Majesty was quite pleased with himself. "I want you to give me power next year," he said.

"All right, Your Majesty," I replied, "but there must be

no delays in getting things up here." (I would have had the powerhouse going today if the material had come through to me.)

"I will see that everything comes," he promised. But just the same, I'll bet I don't get the main elbows and the rest of the penstock before next June.

Then today he said, "I want you to wire the palace here." I had laid out the wiring of this blessed palace two years ago, and it has been in the process of being torn down and rebuilt ever since.

"But, Your Majesty," I protested, "I cannot possibly spare the time for it from my work."

"Two hours a day?"

"No," I insisted, "I would either have to neglect it or my work."

Anyway, I have to revise the estimate, get the plant ordered, and have a man up from Calcutta to do the wiring. Must go into Kabul at the end of the week to see H.M. about it again. Couldn't shake it! But you don't know how particular kings are when it comes to doing things for them personally. The arrangement of the furniture and pictures has to be carefully considered, switches and their locations carefully planned — then, like as not, changed to a better place afterward and the whole palace torn down to do it.

I'm fit as can be, but busy as hell — worked Christmas and have missed the last two Juma'hs. The last three days have been pretty full. A man has to be in three places at the same time here and have eyes in the back of his head, for there isn't a soul who can do the simplest thing without watching, and Baker and I have to do all the skilled work ourselves.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 30 January

I have finished my house-cleaning. For two weeks I stored everything in the godown, and camped out in a room without even a nail in the wall. Had four window seats made,

the roof ceiled with packing-box timber, and the walls whitewashed. Just like a palace now; in fact, it is better than some.

I am well equipped with chairs—have a steamer chair, a camp chair, a cane-seated chair, and one of local make. For two others I bought a country-tanned goatskin for forty-eight cents, dampened the pieces, and laced them underneath drumhead style.

Last week I bought forty-two hundred walnuts for a dollar and sixty cents, and a bushel of almonds, which were somewhat higher. This infernal war has raised prices all around: eggs six and one-half cents per dozen, and I can't get a chicken for less than sixteen cents. They would be higher, but I refused to pay more; I'll eat goat first. Sugar is sixteen cents a pound, so I have cut that out. But seriously, however low these prices may seem, the majority of the people cannot afford them.

We are isolated here, with no caravan routes this side of Charikar. But all winter camels have been trekking up into Kohistan with iron, wheat, chunks of mulberry, and packing cases to be stored in the fort. His Majesty has arranged for about twenty camels and a number of elephants to carry transmission wire and haul iron for the steel towers.

Besides this we have telegrams up to the nineteenth of this month. They are printed by a native in Peshawar, and between the censor and the babu's mistakes they are badly hashed. Here is a sample: *London, January 14. Lord Bryce has received a telegram indicating final destination of the most manly part of the American nation.* What it means God knows; I don't. Some of the piffle in the English papers is sickening. The war seems to be getting no better fast. I'd like to read about something besides masterly retreats. May you live!

Fool Mohammad Blows the Bellows

Jabal-us-Siraj, 5 March 1916

I HAVE given up getting a pipe man up here, so we tackled the riveting this week. Got forty thousand to drive. With patched-up forges we have made sets out of old crowbars, and handles for them out of wire. We have made wrenches and hammers out of old nails. We are making hammer men and other workers out of raw materials, bar the four Pathan riveters that I have been hanging onto for over a year.

Fool Mohammad blows the bellows; Dusenbritches runs the heating of the rivets, and the Devil's Brat passes them, *and* we are averaging a rivet to the minute and a half for eight hours. What is more, we are doing a good job. The Devil's Brat is so tickled with his new job that he has put on his Sunday coat with the pink velvet collar. He grabs a rivet with the tongs, shouts, "Khabardar!" ("Take care!") and runs like hell. If we can keep up the interest, which springs from vanity and rivalry up here, I shall get a second crew started this week and we won't take too long, inshallah.

Dur M'd, one of the students, has made a hammer man. I told Saleh M'd that I was going to give him a trial to see if he could do as well. He's trying to beat him, of course! My head surveyor has also begged permission to be allowed to try it. They are doing fine. Everything is going like clockwork, but if they were left alone for half an hour the organization would go to pot and there would be free fights. It's good fun and interesting, and we are too busy to bother about the war, which seems a long way off.

Yesterday, I heard that some mail had arrived for me in Kabul, brought up by Randall's mehmandar when he return-

ed from Peshawar. Have sent for it, and inshallah, we'll receive some magazines. The bank writes that they have a book for me, but God knows when I shall get it, for Halliday hasn't obtained leave yet, and my man Randall writes that he will be glad to return when the war is over.

We had a four-inch fall of snow the middle of February — about the only snow we have had worth mentioning. The rest has been rain. When I rode about twenty miles out on the line to look at a river crossing, the first of the week, there were crocuses and dandelions springing up everywhere.

I regret that His Majesty is suffering from the gout again — also, that I have not heard from letters written over a month ago affecting the work. But I suppose it is the will of God.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 1 Hamal 1295, New Year's Day
The Year of the Whale

I have been putting in a small bridge today. It is quite warm now; the fruit trees are in bloom, and there are flowers on the sides of the mountains and in the valley. Some very pretty tulips grow wild here — the children brought me a big bunch of them. I was told that the Afghans like to eat white clover, and I've seen the youngsters go into the fields and gather their shirttails full. They don't just nibble it a bit, but eat it by the handful — leaves, stems, and all.

We are going out into camp on the first of April, all three of us, stringing the line wire. I think it will take us about two months and a half, and if we don't have rain, it will be pleasant camping out now. Want to finish before the month of fast and the real hot weather comes.

Kabul, 12 May 1916

In the name of Allah! Just came in from the transmission line. His Majesty was to see me today, but has sent word to postpone it until tomorrow. In the meantime my work is held up. Every time I come in means another delay. But the

weather has been fine, and we are averaging a mile or more a day even though we have had to reset towers.

I note your list of prices of foodstuffs. I made up my accounts yesterday. For the forty days we have been in camp my man, who is an Afghan and cannot read or write, had to give an itemized daily account. He stood up and reeled off the whole forty days from memory. If he doesn't trip he will parrot the whole thing off, and I think he makes few mistakes. The days we had wild duck, quail, partridge, liver, chicken, or meat all came in their places. The account included firewood and flour, with an average of thirty-one cents per day. He probably makes twenty-five cents on this, but I don't worry even if the cost is a little high. I pay him five dollars a month and he is better than any downcountry servant I have had yet. Been with me five years now (I'm touching wood). I have more trouble with the other fellows' servants than my own. They are a hard lot, certainly, but most of them would spoil any servant.

Day before yesterday, when we got the line up to Kal'ah Sa'eed Hassan, our fourth camp, I connected up the telephone. They told me that the mullah said it was all a lie about being able to talk over a wire. He had had his ear to the wire and could hear nothing. We sent for him and got him to talk on the phone until the crowd gave him the laugh; then he chased off. There is a crowd whenever we get out the phone; no one believes until they hear, and you can hear this phone ten feet away. I had about twenty of the bunch hold hands and rang through them. It's great to hear them describe the sensation.

If I have the luck to get an audience with His Imperial Majesty tomorrow, I shall add a note to this and send it along.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 24 June

We have just finished two months, April and May, under canvas. Moving our camp of tents across country, we put

up forty-two miles of transmission line from here to Kabul—all but a few thousand feet where the towers are lacking. During the first month His Majesty sent a car for me twice to come into Kabul; both times I went back without seeing him. Sent for me twice more and countermanded the orders before I started. The fifth time I saw him after three days' wait. Then, when we finished the wire stringing, I had to see him again—his order, two weeks' wait, and all my work hung up. Kept me dangling about Kabul doing nothing and my men idle as well. I have lost five weeks in this way since the first of the year. When I do see him, His Majesty is always hospitable and unfailingly courteous, but there is no value placed on time here.

Now at last, having had the honor of several audiences, I finally got him to order the material we have been short of for some time. I have had bids for him for the spill flume no less than three times. First the material was all in Bombay and could have been obtained quickly, but by the time the order was signed the material was sold elsewhere, and the firm would not bid again. Then I got a bid from Calcutta. Before it was ordered, it went up in price. Even after that it was so long until they got the order that they wired another big rise in price. When I showed the wire to H.M., he threw up his hands and asked me to tell him what to do. (I wanted to tell him it was nobody's fault but his own.) I advised him to order it at once before prices went higher. The material has to come from England now, and it will be a year before we get it.

You remember the gadgets I purchased for His Majesty while I was home. Well, that was why he finally sent for me in Kabul—to show them to him. I was jolly glad when we got through with it. H.M. very kindly thanked me and said he was pleased with everything, but praises be that I did not get any more, for I suspect I have not heard the last of it yet. If anything goes wrong I'll be sent for to fix it, no matter where I am or how important my work is.

I got one good thing through this trip—an order on the bank at Peshawar for our pay, which has been piling up here for over a year. Halliday and I took the lot down to the treasury, turned it in, and got a receipt. It weighed only about fourteen hundred pounds in all. You can imagine what a task it is to drag it around and finally down to Peshawar. We have to lose the use of it in the meantime; the government has to pay for yabus to take it down; besides, it all has to be carted up from India in the first place.

The head of the treasury in Kabul is unable to read or write. When two mirzas who had the position in succession were both killed for stealing from the government money, a man was appointed who could not write, with the idea that he would prove more trustworthy. Diogenes would need an electric torch in this country, and even then I do not doubt but that his search would prove fruitless.

There are no banks in the country and no paper money. No Afghan would trust his money in a bank, nor would he take paper money—except, of course, a merchant who uses and is familiar with the Indian paper money. Many of them have Russian notes (which could be got for a song in Kabul during the last years of the war). Barats are issued on the treasury for money, and the mirzas pay all salaries in rupees; no Afghan ever receives his pay without the mirza getting a percentage.

I have been instrumental in persuading the Amir to do some business through the English bank in Peshawar. His Majesty invited one of the bank officials to Kabul and arranged to keep some money on deposit in the bank. Payments are made through the bank after it has checked the material received from the British and other firms. His Majesty has a large balance with the Indian Government, arrears of his annual subsidy, about forty-eight lakhs I am told. The bank wished to make an arrangement whereby this money or the greater part of it could be deposited with them. They could have made a good thing of it, besides

saving the Amir considerable expense. It would have safeguarded him against being swindled by his own people and by some of the Europeans whom he deals with as well. Realizing this, Afghans and Europeans alike have tried to work against the new arrangement.

The Indian Government would not agree that the arrears of the subsidy should be deposited in the bank, for some reason (supposed to be connected with the war). So H.M. has indented on them for only a lakh or two at a time, which he deposits in the bank for current expenses. Previous to this the Esteemed Ghulam Haider Khan, Afghan agent and postmaster in Peshawar, used to make the payments. Most firms insisted on full payment in advance for all materials or equipment supplied, and quite rightly.

When I returned here on the fifteenth, it seemed like getting home. Our main elbows have finally arrived, Sut and Baker are hammering away at the pipe line, and I'm putting in an eighty-foot aqueduct. The flume received is all cock-eyed; we have to cut off the flanges and reset and redrill them. Will take us two weeks to sort it. The next person who mentions anyone responsible for this kind of so-called workmanship to me will think he has stumbled on a floating mine.

His Majesty told me of Lord Kitchener's death before I left Kabul. He got the news through ahead of the mail. They talk so little about the war here that one can only guess at what they think, but I know they thoroughly discount the newspaper reports that we get. Have just learned of the Russian successes in Galicia and of the great British naval victory off Jutland.

By treaty the British are allowed an envoy at Kabul, the capital, but the Afghans stipulated that the envoy should be a Mussalman, although, of course, he is a British subject. The British Indian envoy, or ilchi as the Afghans call him, has a clerk or two and a small bodyguard from the Indian army. No one is allowed to have anything to do with him,

and he has rather a lonesome time of it during the three years of his appointed term. Anyone who visited him would be suspected of intriguing, so he is given a wide berth. I imagine that he and his staff attend to little, except the correspondence between the Amir and the British Indian Government which passes through their hands.

His Majesty gave the envoy permission to come up here for three days. I was asked to take him over the place. Showed him the turbines, and after I had finished explaining them he wanted to know where the water was decomposed. I showed him the generators, and then he wanted to know where the electricity was made. As he caught sight of the lightning arrester tanks, he said, "Oh, yes, there are the batteries." When I got through, he wanted to know where the chemicals were. I think he came (and went) with the idea that the electricity was made directly from the water with the aid of chemicals.

With great ceremony he invited me to dinner. I gathered that he had invited some of the local lights to dine with him also, but they all had headaches and unfortunately could not come. He informed me that Mr. Hughes had been nominated president of the United States. After the fourth explanation, I think he was partly convinced that a nomination did not constitute an election to the presidency. He spoke of a country called California to the west of the United States, and then he discoursed on the Koran. Told me that there was a mosque in London where they were preaching the true religion. Gave me a crude tract written in English with a photo of an English convert on the front page, a captain. As far as general knowledge of any sort, he seemed to be about as near a blank as one could find.

Kafir Idols

Jabal-us-Siraj, 1 July 1916

RECENTLY, when I was in Kabul hunting about for lost cases of machinery—found in all sorts of places—I stumbled on a bunch of twenty-six wooden idols, which were corded up on a veranda of an old godown in the palace enclosure.

The late Amir, Abdur Rahman, had brought them back from Kafiristan. When he made a conquest of that country and gathered it into the folds of the true faith by the usual Muslim methods, he brought many Kafirs to Afghanistan, replacing them with his own people. This is an old Afghan custom which helps keep down rebellion. Since the conquest Kafiristan is called Nuristan (Country of Light), having received the light of the Mohammedan religion. *Kafir* means "an unbeliever," as of course you know, since the word is generally used by Muslims to designate anyone not belonging to the true faith.

Kafiristan is only a small area about five thousand miles square, for the most part unmapped, located sixty miles east of Kabul in the northeastern part of Afghanistan. The people of this district are supposed to be of pre-Hellenic origin. Europeans know little of the country except its edges.

The Amir put many of the Kafirs into the army, and the Afghans speak of them as being very ignorant. From what I have seen of them they are fully as intelligent, with better-shaped heads and features—though many of the Afghans, especially the better class, are handsome, fine-featured men.

I thought it would be worth while to get some pictures of the idols, and slipped down one Juma'h with my head man, gave the guard some baksheesh, dragged out the lot, wiped

off the dust of years, and took several photos of them. I did not have the opportunity to ask permission, but the guard allowed this to be done after receiving the baksheesh. He would not help to handle the buts, however.

It was a hot, dusty day with a strong wind. I had to do most of the work and got pretty well used up, as I had a fever. Have some fair negatives, but my paper is so old that they do not print well, and I am sorry the pictures did not come out better. Never had a chance to do them again. One has to take when the opportunity offers, regardless of light conditions or time, and almost everything in Afghanistan is dirt-colored anyway—no contrast.

Most of the idols, except a group of seven, were about life-size and of rather crude workmanship. The smaller figures averaged about three feet high. Two of them were seated on deer, with their faces framed between the horns or antlers. The rest, which were seated on stools, had rather a royal air, and may have represented kings or rulers. Even so, to an Afghan any image is a but.

Most of the idols seemed to be females, although the crude way of forming their faces, which were just long flat slabs with projections for noses and holes gorged out for eyes, made them all look like bearded men. In one case there remained a white stone that did duty for an eye, and I think the others may have had stones, too. Necklaces of cowrie shells had been embedded in the wood of some, and a few of the shells remained. Many idols had what appeared to be quivers strapped to their backs, an artistic touch being the band binding one of them. There was a difference in their headdresses, a few very elaborate, but for the most part they appeared to be very large turbans. The clothes they wore had designs that would indicate they were embroidered, and showed the weave of the cloth, over and under—not bad, but the faces of most of them were fairly crude. Some of the idols must be very old, as their backs were dry-rotted.

I had in mind to ask His Majesty to let me retake these sometime, and also to give me one or two of them, but it never came off. I am enclosing five prints of them and a print of the town of Istalif, on the chance that you might be interested.

Istalif, which is about thirty-five miles north of Kabul, is the largest town in Kohistan except Charikar, and is supposed to be the "garden city" of this district. I have heard tales of its beauty ever since I came here: "Very fine place, excellent peaches, pears, plums, and apples, the best water, and the air is without compare." So one Juma'h when we were on the line work, I rode over fifteen miles and saw it. In the fertile nullah there is quite a stream of water. A narrow strip of land on each side of the stream, which runs back into the foothills for perhaps a mile, is planted in orchards. Any little oasis in this barren country is considered to be like the garden of Eden.

My sarishtadar said, "Maybe you have seen better places in your country, but there was nothing finer in Afghanistan." I have given him some magazines. He doesn't brag so much about these lovely places now, but most Afghans know nothing beyond the wall of these mountains.

During the Great War a chief from the Kunar district, who was reported to have 150,000 men at his command, came to Kabul to induce the Amir to take part in the war against the Allies. He remained as a guest of the Amir for some months—was shown about in a motorcar and entertained, but could not return to his own district until His Majesty gave him leave.

By good luck, when I was in the city I got some pictures of professional wrestlers and men at swordplay who were performing for the entertainment of the Kunar chief. I was coming from work about four o'clock one day and ran onto the wrestling game at Andarabi in Kabul. After chasing home for a camera, I got an introduction to the chief, who is in-

clined to be rather haughty, and obtained permission to take pictures. I then spent the half hour of fading light dodging around among the crowd. Considering the shade from the tree, they did not come out so bad. No one made room or took any notice of me, and getting them to pose was out of the question. Was lucky to be allowed to take pictures at all.

The Kunar chief, wearing a white turban, white tombans, and a parti-colored coat, sat in the center under a big chinar tree. When the contest was over, the victor kissed the hands of the honored guest and walked off, to be massaged by four attendants. Wrestling seems to be one of the most popular sports. In fact, there is a school for wrestlers in Kabul which turns out some very good men, but an Afghan once thoroughly defeated never gets over his humiliation.

Then came some fencers. They used foils and carried light, thickly padded shields about eight inches in diameter, which allowed them to parry a stroke and make a quick return thrust. Before an Afghan engages he turns toward Mecca, lays his sword on the ground before him, and makes a short prayer to Allah to give him victory over his opponent.

The last of the steel plates for the penstock came yesterday, so we are busy fabricating that. God willing, we shall have it in place by December, although Ramazan begins day after tomorrow and we shall be able to work only half-time for a month. I am short two assistants this year; all the men who have gone down on leave have written back that they will not return until the war is over. There are only three Europeans here now, and all are Americans.

This seems to be about the only quiet, peaceful, and well-governed country left on the globe now. We get the English papers, and there is some little American news — mostly sensationalism and political mudslinging. The Afghans ask, "What does this mean?" and "Why is this?" I have often wondered whether some of the politicians, if they could be

transported here and had to answer the barbarians' questions, might not be ashamed, as I am. The question is, which has the advantage, the civilized or the uncivilized barbarian? May Allah have you in his keeping! May you not be tired!

Jabal-us-Siraj, 19 August 1916

The hot season is here again; at the moment all that I have on is a short-sleeved undershirt and a pair of silk trousers. Anyway, we have finished with Ramazan. Five of my men, including the Walking Corpse and Dusenbritches, who did not show up after the Id holidays, had to be rounded up. The sticks, good thick ones, were ready when they got here.

When the Walking Corpse was brought in, he was still dressed in an old suit of clothes I had given him. I called his attention to it and asked if he thought he had done well. "Ghalat kardam" ("I made a mistake") was all he had to say. Afghans caught in a lie speak of it as a ghalat; it does not sound so harsh. They do not get angry when accused of lying, but will argue and try to prove their case. Once I accused a man of lying and he said to me, "No, inshallah, I am telling the truth."

Dusenbritches was the last to arrive; he sent word that he was sick, but word was sent by telephone to fetch him dead or alive. The telephone comes in very handy. When he came he was dressed in two coats in spite of the heat. He salaamed in a pale voice and there was silence. The sarishtadar looked inquiringly at me and I just said thirty and all coats off. That is all there was to it.

The criminal laws of Afghanistan are so severe that one might think the workmen in the shops would be deterred from shirking their jobs, stealing material, and running away. But not a bit of it. The common legal punishments, stoning to death, blowing from the gun, hanging, strangling, throat-cutting, blinding, and cutting off the hands, have no real terrors for the Afghan on mischief bent.

If a man runs away after having committed some crime, one method used to make him return is to throw all his family into prison. It is said too that if an Afghan is wanted, a bribe to his nearest relatives or friends will betray him. My men have been taken and put in irons, and when I asked the reason I would be told that the son or brother had run away from the Kabul shops, or something of the kind.

An Afghan is not allowed to leave the country. If he runs away his property is confiscated, his family put in prison, and his women violated, so it is not an easy matter to escape. Another way to bring to time a man who may not have paid his taxes, or may have run off to avoid a debt, is to put a mahsel on him. This consists of sending soldiers and quartering them on his home. It generally fetches him, since the men and their horses have to be fed and housed.

I have used the mahsel with effect, myself, to bring back runaway workmen, and then have kept them in irons for a month or so as a punishment, not because I wanted to keep them particularly but because if they were not brought back there would be a general exodus.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 14 October

There is nothing new here. We will finish the pipe line this week and then go ahead with the forebay and gates.

I have had bad luck this month—fever, tonsilitis, lumbago, and an ulcerated tooth. On top of this I tore the skin off the inside of my hands by grabbing a rope to save some of the blighters from falling down the pipe. I got the worst of it. Besides having to be dressed, I had to have my food cut up for me for a couple of weeks. We have just finished a four days' holiday, sandwiched in between two Juma'hs. Holidays are hard to get through here; praises be, there are no more this year. We have just had our first rains and the thermometer has dropped. This year the hot weather held throughout September, and into October as well. Peace be unto you!

Uncaught Sparrows Are Cheap

Jabal-us-Siraj, 11 November 1916

HIS Gracious Goodness paid us a surprise visit on the fifteenth of last month, the day we finished the pipe. He did not get here until sundown and he left about ten in the evening. Said he was pleased with the work, and I took the opportunity to borrow some cement from him. He said, "All right, but when you get yours, you must give me five barrels for four." I told him I would if I had that much left. He kept on insisting on the five for four until he went away.

His Majesty was quite pleased with himself and everybody else—I guess because he got away ahead of the rest and they had to follow as best they could. Some of them, including the heir, did not get here till after dark, and they had to be shown over the place with lanterns.

We are getting frosts now. Started about ten days ago and there have been some beastly windy days, but when the wind doesn't blow it is fine. We have finished the excavation for the forebay and are putting in the masonry. Dug up a handful of silver coins last week, about six feet down, which must be some hundreds of years old. I got four as my portion.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 30 December 1916

I wrote you that His Majesty paid us a visit. He was coming back the end of this month, but I heard accidentally that he was going to Jalalabad at the end of the week (nice little scheme to prevent applications for leave)—also that there was an American dentist in Kabul. I went by car to Kabul the next day. Sent word that I must have my teeth sorted up or I would have to get leave, and that if we could

get our teeth taken care of, Baker and I were not going to ask for leave this winter. Worked like a charm—the car was sent right back for Baker.

The dentist worked on me in the early mornings before his royal patients came on. H.M. came around while I was in the chair, punched me in the stomach, and watched the dentist work on me. He was a Hoosier about thirty years old, and he could talk in a steady stream—entertainingly, too. All the pay he got was two thousand rupees or about $660 per week, and every time he filled a tooth, a present of a gold watch or the equivalent. I saw him get two watches one morning, a gold repeater from the prince and another from the commander in chief, Nadir Shah.

That night I dined with him. He wasn't in when I arrived at his quarters, but he came in a few minutes and apologized for being late. H.M. had kept him. He had a little sack containing two hundred sovereigns that H.M. had given him as a present. Said he supposed I'd disapprove, but he couldn't help it, they just kept giving him things. Having to do something for the royal person himself, especially allaying pain, always means presents and high rewards. Anyway, I got my dental work done for nothing, and I told him I wasn't giving him any gold watches either.

After the work was finished, I saw H.M. to thank him and say goodbye. Then I sprang a surprise on him: "I am going away next year. Will Your Majesty raise Baker's pay and arrange with him to take over when I leave, and get some more men?" I did not know quite what would happen, but I knew he would be sore, and I wasn't disappointed.

"It will be a disgrace to you if you leave before the plant is completed," he protested.

"No, Your Majesty," I said, "I have not been responsible for the delays, and have already overstayed my time nearly three years. Besides, I hope to see the plant running before I leave, but some arrangements will have to be made in advance to keep things going."

But he would have to be contrary. He would not give Baker a piece more until he had stayed his three years, wouldn't get any more men, would do nothing until the plant was running.

So I said, "Maybe Your Majesty would have preferred me to have taken leave, gone to Peshawar, turned around, said 'To hell with Afghanistan,' as the last eight men have done, and left you with no one to run the plant." Then I listened to a lecture on the iniquities of some of those who have gone before, and he wanted to know if I thought this was good.

I came back with, "Doesn't what I have just done tell Your Majesty what I think of it?" That went home! Previously he had said, "If you go, we will still have God," and had told a fable about forty ducks flying over, which sold for a pice apiece. "But one duck in the hand sold for more than the lot," and he added, with reference to Baker, that uncaught sparrows were cheap — meaning he might go away, too.

"Your Majesty might send for Baker and ask him if he will agree to stay five years under the conditions proposed," I suggested. I had said nothing to Baker myself.

But H.M. said, "It is time for prayers. I have had the nosebleed since I prayed last. I will have to go and wash."

After prayers he sent for Baker, raised his pay on the spot, got him to sign for five years, and also sanctioned the additional men. We had a little more talk and then prayers again.

When I said goodbye, I asked, "Is Your Majesty in a generous mood?"

"Yes," H.M. graciously admitted.

"All right," I said, "give me one thousand rupees to distribute amongst my Afghan donkeys at Jabal-us-Siraj." I got it! Some of the blighters make only a dollar and sixty cents per month and from that up to ten dollars. I have worked them pretty hard and a little extra won't hurt them. May Allah have you in his keeping!

We Get Up with the Lark

In camp on the outskirts of Kabul
2 June 1917

YOU will remember that the main gates failed on February 5. His Majesty just heard of it a week ago, and he has made two appointments to see me within a week. The last one was a near thing—he was coming to me out of the Haram Sarai, got nosebleed, and turned back. Next day he took a purgative. He has had an attack of gout and is still very sick, though he is out in his car every day. Four months since the gates failed—no firman for the new ones signed, and it will take six months to make them and God knows how long to get them here. There's over a year gone right there. I'm short of adjectives—will leave it to you!

We have been out on the line for over a month, living in tents. Built four telephone stations, and are now finishing the transmission line into Kabul; the remainder of the towers came at last.

I see you have started warring. I don't suppose you had the foresight to plant potatoes in the tennis court or to lay in a supply of rice? Some of you spendthrift Americans will have to learn to economize now.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 14 June

Your clipping, Mr. Biglow's indictment of American consuls, is rather drastic, but I think it is mainly so. I know about the fool that was in Bombay, and a friend of mine told me of the last two that were in Calcutta, both leaving several thousand rupees of card debts unpaid at the club when they left. He wrote to the State Department about it and even offered to pay up half of the debt in one case. No

reply. An Englishman will beat his doctor's bill or board bill, but he is very punctilious about paying his gambling debts; it's a point of honor with him. My friend said that sometimes when the consul would be mentioned someone would say, "Oh, yes, a countryman of yours." I wonder if the government will ever wake up to it and the harm it does.

I have forgotten my letter file, so do not know what number this should be. Your letter via China just came as I was closing this. May Allah have you in his keeping!

Kabul, 3 July

I had an audience with His Imperial Majesty finally. Got firmans signed for the gates and three more men, and also got H.M. to hurry up one transport that has been on the road for over a year.

He was very shy with me. I know for a fact that he was afraid I would say something more about leaving. He was very formal to begin with, and I had a clash with him about expenses for the men coming out. He had already made an order, and it is hard to get a royal order countermanded, but we found a way. After business was finished I got in a few shots – reminded H.M. that I had only come for three years and had been here six. H.M. said that I must not think of going away for a year or a year and a half yet, and I'd see what a good recommendation he would give me, and so on. He straddled a chair and kept on talking for twenty minutes after I had been dismissed. I tried to tell him he had delayed the game just four months by not signing the firmans. Not a bit of use; the king can do no wrong. It is not possible for anyone to understand the difficulties and unreasonable delays here without going through it on the ground.

I am living down at the Baber Sarai, where I spent my first weeks in Afghanistan. They had a little two-room house in the Palace grounds allotted to me, but I balked – hot, inconvenient, no privacy. This is the eleventh day of the

month of the fast. Also it is a holiday, Jashn, the day when the governors and such do homage to H.M.

May you live!

Kabul, 20 July

We get up with the lark and go to bed with the chickens. An old rooster here that sleeps at the head of the stairs goes first and I follow. "Blessed is the man who invented sleep."

One morning this week when I was riding to work, which is about two miles away, my horse stumbled from lack of food. It has happened before, but my sarishtadar said he had written six letters to the office responsible for the supply of food. Told him there would be no more writing about it—rode down into the city, gathered in the mirza as well as one or two more, and sent them under guard to the prince The blame was laid on a syce (mehtar they call them here), who had run away. These people sell the horses' food and let them starve.

The very next day, I caught Mr. Syce red-handed, oozing off with some of my firewood; took one of the sticks and gave him a good beating. It is a fine thing when you can catch them at it. My servant has found a way to pick my trunk lock and has been lifting dibs. This began about a year ago. I have a scheme to trap him, but do not know whether it would pay or not, since servants are scarce and hard to catch. I stopped the leak temporarily by putting the cash in another box and giving him the keys to it. Haven't lost a bean since.

My best mason died. My best carpenter, who is also the worst one, is in jail, after being arrested three times and thrashed twice, all in the same week. His name is Shakh Umar, which means "Branch of Umar," and I call him the Crookd Branch of Umar. It is just one damned thing after another. (I see I have dropped an *e* from that name; that's Persian. I find it affecting my spelling constantly.)

Kabul, 21 September

Ramazan is over. The Id Masjid lies on the eastern edge of the city north of the Kabul River, facing from Mecca. This Great Mosque is used for the celebration of the Id at the beginning and end of Ramazan, which lasts from the time when the new moon is actually seen till the next new moon.

Coming into the city in the early morning from Baber, we mingled with the thousands of Afghans gathering for the ceremony where the prayers of the faithful are given in the presence of His Royal Majesty, the Light of the Faith. We passed crowds of Afghans dressed in their best—conspicuously, for festival days are about the only time when Afghans wear clean clothes.

Presently the grand procession started. In the cavalcade were His Majesty's sardars, his bodyguard of lancers, military band, and officers resplendent in bright-colored uniforms—all mounted on fine horses. His Majesty rode in an open carriage accompanied by three of his sardars and his outriders.

There were elephants with silver and gold cloth trappings, on which the Amir and the royal family used to ride in state, but of late years the elephants have paraded with empty howdahs. These howdahs are of solid silver, and thereby hangs a tale. An Indian agent of an Indian firm came to Kabul to trade. His firm made howdahs, expecting him to sell them and make a bit of profit. I am told that His Majesty decided to accept them as a gift. I do know that the agent was there for over a year trying to get his money for the howdahs. I believe he finally got away, but without the money, and the howdahs stayed.

The gold and silver embroideries of the cloth covering the elephants are very handsome. An elephant is always fully conscious of his gorgeous trappings. While he does not exactly strut, he puts on airs, and when his trappings are

taken off, he sulks and the difference in his gait is noticeable.

Afghans from the city and hills gathered in the mosque—so large was the assembly that an overflow of thousands had to pray in the court outside. The colorful pageantry of the Id procession, the solemn ceremony, the white-robed Muslims intoning, "Allahu Akbar"—all testify to the greatest force which dominates this kingdom.

Returning, we passed vendors selling sweet cakes to the cheerful Afghans along the road. Dreary Ramazan is past.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 24 November

My temper is getting shorter every year I stay here. I had three men coming out here and expected to get away, but they have all been drafted—at least, two were; the third volunteered. The company writes me they can get no substitutes of any age, so there you are.

I came back after four months in Kabul and am getting ready for winter. The old elephant, Pari, has just finished bringing in the winter's wood. Costs a cent and a half a pound and it's green mulberry at that. Potatoes are higher, a cent and a half per pound; eggs have gone up to eight cents; cloth and imported supplies have about tripled; kerosene costs a dollar and twenty-five cents a gallon. I bought two thousand walnuts for about a dollar and a half, for they count them out one by one—must be about fifty pounds. Onions, carrots, and pumpkins are about all we can get in the wintertime. There has been no rain since last May, not even a shower this fall, nor any snow so far. Bad outlook for the winter wheat. It is pretty lonesome here now, and the war does not make cheerful reading.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 10 December

Our only rain came on the last day of November. Day before yesterday we had our first snow, about two inches—

mostly gone today, but it has turned colder. Have finished riveting up the flume and want five days more of good weather to finish the masonry work.

We recently acquired four hundred more soldiers here and some guns. H.M. sent them up "so they would be here when he comes" next year. Four hundred thieves—they are already busy about the district stealing wood. Two of our guards had their shoes stolen yesterday while they were praying. They generally place their guns and other belongings out in front where they can see them when they kneel to pray. They were careless this time. Beautiful religion this: all one has to do is to pray five times a day, loud and fervently; between times he can lie, steal, or do anything he likes. "God is merciful and kind." There goes the last howl for prayers now. God can take a rest until four in the morning.

Kabul of Recent Times

CHANGES come slowly in the East and have little effect on the lives of the natives. Of late years in the fashionable quarter of Kabul there are traffic policemen, and even frequent signposts which read "by the left side go," with a hand pointing the way. The people observe these signs little better than the camels.

An Afghan walking on the wrong side of the road caught sight of the Amir coming. He could not cross over without being detected, so he wheeled and started back in his tracks. This, of course, brought him on the right side of the road. When the Amir asked him where he was going, the man told a yarn about going somewhere in the city. His Majesty gave him a good long walk in the wrong direction and laughed about it afterwards.

Kabulis are not allowed on the streets after gunfire, so one is frequently challenged after dark with "In sowt chiye?" At intervals along the streets and roads near Kabul there are police stations, where guards collect octroi and do police duty.

A few years ago there was hardly a wheeled vehicle to be seen in Kabul or on the roads, except those belonging to the Amir. Now there are tongas and tumtums and bicycles. The tumtum, an Indian importation, is a two-wheeled cart; it is lighter than the tonga but has the same two seats back to back. Both are now kept for hire in Kabul, so that people may use them in making long trips or in going to and from India. In addition, there must be thirty motorcars in Kabul which belong to the royal family or to some of the more important officials.

There are very few beggars in the streets. The Amir has

a special sarai which he has set aside for their care, and supplies their food daily. The majority of these beggars are faqirs, or holy men, who live pretty well as a rule but generally dress in rags or some outlandish garb. Some of them are crazy; others affect to be. There is a Persian saying, "Divana, laikan bi kar-i-khud hushyar" ("Crazy, but in his own interest wise").

"God has taken their minds, and God speaks through them." Some of the wealthier Afghans support and keep these holy beggars in their homes, with the idea that they thereby acquire merit and that it will bring them good luck. The mustofi kept one of these lunatics in his home in Kabul. The old idiot used to wear a skullcap all studded with Bokharan coins. He was given the best of food and everything he asked for and was treated with ceremonious respect. If he were tired, some of the household would massage his legs, while he reclined on cushions and babbled rubbish. Even the great mustofi himself would defer to him and make him presents.

The woolen mills are about the most useful enterprise in Kabul. The mill is run entirely by Afghans, and last winter the general in charge told me they were turning out five hundred yards of cloth per day. This is probably an exaggeration, but even so they are doing good work according to Afghan standards. They make an excellent quality of cloth, which is used mostly for uniforms and great coats for the army.

The Kabul workshops, said to employ 990 men, make rifles, cartridges, shrapnel, and guns as large as four inches. The output of rifles is only three or four a day. They are neither bored true nor sighted well, and shoot accordingly. The colonel of the shops reports that there are two thousand mountain guns made up—but he is an Afghan, so we will say three hundred. They have tried for a long time to make machine guns, with poor success; after three or four shots

the guns jam. In the foundry where iron and brass are cast, they always offer up a prayer before breaking the earthen gate that holds back the molten metal in the crucible where it is melted. In fact, most of their work is started with a prayer.

One thing is certain: everything made in the shops costs the government three or four times as much as it would if bought in the open market. The overhead is very great; the shop administration is an unlimited source of graft. The shops are full of officials and mirzas who manipulate the accounts for a big rake-off. The fuel burnt under the boilers now costs at least one hundred and thirty thousand dollars per annum. This is a big sum in a poor country where the total revenue, which is largely paid in kind, does not in all probability exceed four million dollars, exclusive of the British subsidy of six hundred thousand dollars. When put into operation the electric power from the transmission plant will save this yearly expenditure for firewood, if nothing else.

There is a boot factory in Kabul where they tan their own leather. I have been told that they make eighteen thousand pairs of boots a year, mostly for the army. Some of the finer boots, women's boots, and slippers compare well in workmanship and appearance with European makes, but do not wear well. They make kid gloves and saddles patterned after the English type. The price of leather has doubled since the war, just to be in keeping with downcountry prices. The plant is steam operated and has American boot-making machinery.

Although Kabul has a plant for minting coins, many of the old ones are still in circulation, some of which are very crude and irregular. Nevertheless, the weight is exact. The Kabuli rupee was worth sixteen cents before the war but has almost doubled in value because of the rise in silver. During the last few years many have been shipped to India, melted up, and sold. The rupee, kran, and abbasi are silver; the pice, shahi,

and sannar are copper. 1 rupee = 2 kran = 3 abbasi = 6 sannar = 12 shahi = 60 pice.

The powder factory makes a very fair quality of black powder. The powder expert is a Turk, one Reza Beg, who gets a salary of four hundred dollars a month, drives a smart trap, and dresses in the latest European clothes. He has been to Paris and other cities on the continent. His ambition, as well as the Amir's, is to make a smokeless powder. I have heard that he succeeded, but do not think any amount has ever been made.

Some years ago the Amir decided to pipe water for the city from Paghman, about eighteen miles away, up in the foothills. Five-inch cast-iron pipe was ordered and brought to Kabul for this purpose. Another engineer came along, said this was not suitable, and ordered steel tubing of the same diameter. The pipe line was laid and a reservoir built, but the water has never been utilized because of troubles with the pipe line. Since the bed of the Kabul River, which runs through the city, is often quite dry, with the water taken out for irrigation, a canal from above runs through the city and furnishes water for all purposes.

According to the Amir, the canal was only 10 percent sewage where it entered the city, but where it left the city it was 90 percent sewage and only 10 percent water. There are wells, but the majority of the people get their water for cooking and drinking from the ditches, which are full of all sorts of floating debris. They bathe in these ditches and wash their clothes, vegetables, and corpses. On the march, I have seen an Afghan get down to drink the dirty roiled water at the road crossing, while the mule he was riding started upstream looking for clean water. The Koran stipulates that one must only drink from flowing water, but if it is only moving a foot an hour it is lawful.

Cholera epidemics, which are frequent, generally start in the city and spread into the country. During the recent epi-

demic of influenza the people died off like flies. In a house in the Deh Afghan that had seventeen inmates there was but one old man left. All over the city one could hear the doleful sound of the women on the housetops, wailing for the dead.

Infant mortality must be very high in Afghanistan, judging from observation and from the slow increase in population. Smallpox is very prevalent, but fatalities are few; this disease seems not so deadly with Orientals. The Indians have a saying that a boy is not a man till he has had smallpox. There is no bubonic plague because of the high altitude.

The atmosphere is very dry. Disturbing blankets, or pulling off woolen garments, one always hears a sharp, snapping, crackling noise. During the spring rains and sometimes in the fall, the Kohistan and Kabul districts have quite severe thundershowers, but the rainfall is light. Most of the year the clouds hang over and back of the mountains.

Hardly a month goes by without a small zilzila. Only once has the tremor been severe enough to cause one to seek safety, and this did no damage, bar shaking down a mud wall or two. There is evidence to show that the Kabul valley was once a lake bed. I have found fossil shells in the rocks on the mountain sides.

There are no European doctors in the country. The Amir has several native doctors in his employ—Indian Muslims who have been educated in the English college at Lahore. Some are loaned to the Amir by the Indian Government from the Indian service, where they had been merely hospital attendants. Most of them style themselves doctors but have little knowledge of medicine or anything else. They use English drugs, and their idea is to give a prescription containing about half the contents of the pharmacopoeia. The doctor assigned to us at Jabal-us-Siraj we call Sure Death. He has killed three of my men that I know of, and ought to be hanged for murder—not of one, but of many.

Kabul has a hospital (the only one in the country) directed by a Turkish doctor, Dr. Mani Beg, who has studied in Paris and seems to be a fair surgeon. He has had pictures taken which show him surrounded by members of the royal family and holding up a man's insides to view in both hands. He has done some very good work, though, even making his own vaccine and vaccinating for smallpox. The hospital accommodations are rather crude, but it is not bad for Afghanistan and stands for progress. The doctor insists on keeping the place fairly clean and on using sterilized bandages. There are cots with sheets on them for the patients in the free hospital, in addition to free government dispensaries, but the people complain that they are made to pay. The numerous doctors of the new school of medicine reap a harvest.

Whenever there is a cholera epidemic, the Amir takes all the best doctors with him and retires to Paghman. Anyone coming from an infested district is thoroughly disinfected before he is allowed in His Majesty's presence. The Light of the World must be safeguarded, although the fate of the common people is a small matter. It is the custom; any Oriental potentate would do likewise.

A Lamp Is Lit

Jabal-us-Siraj, 17 Dalw 1296
23 February 1918

HIS Imperial Majesty, the Light of the World, and his court are at Jalalabad. Baker and I started up the machines here about two weeks ago and lit a lamp after six and one-half years. We are a long way from being able to operate, but it is something to have made a start. The first time the lights were turned on, there were about ninety in the powerhouse. I waited until it was good and dark and then told my head Afghan, who calls himself the superintendent, that he could have the honor of switching them on. He almost fell backwards when he closed the switch and the lights flashed up all over the station. You should have seen the natives—first wide-eyed and staring—then a broad grin on every face. Most of them had never seen even a kerosene lamp, and all they know about electricity is that it is bargh (lightning). And the foreign devil claimed he could make lights with it out of water, which they firmly disbelieved until they saw it with their own eyes!

I expected to go home last year, but three men I was getting out were taken by Uncle Sam. I have only one now, so I guess I'm marooned until you finish off the vandals. We have had about every trouble, every delay possible—still lack essentials and men to operate with. These people would be about equal to a flock of simians in a powerhouse, and fully as reliable.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 27 April
The Year of the Horse

This month has been rainy since the beginning. The almond blossoms came out the first of March. About four days

ago the apricots bloomed; then yesterday we had four inches of snow, and it is blowing today with no sun. If it does not turn warmer there will be no almonds or apricots this year.

Baker and I went on a strike last week. It started in this way: the gentleman who does the cooking has been stealing food and money. Of this I have been aware. I have been collecting evidence, expecting to let it go on until H.M. returned, but he got so bold that I was afraid he would find out somehow that we knew of his thieving and do something desperate. He had the cunning of an animal. So I told the sarishtadar to have him put in bandi, which he did. I asked the sarishtadar if the man thought we were fools. "No," Mirza M'd said. "He may have thought you had so much you would not miss it. He probably got to gambling and became reckless." I'm curious to see what sort of judgment will be given.

I jumped the second servant for falsifying the bazaar bill, and he bolted. Baker and I descended to the kitchen after announcing that we were not going near the work until the chap was brought back. They got him the third day, just as soon as they realized that we meant it. To make it impressive, we stayed in a week and had the kitchen renovated and everything cleaned up. I won't describe it. You can let your imagination run riot and not be far wrong. We now keep pretty close tabs on what it takes to feed us, and take in the kitchen going and coming. You have to do one of two things —never go near the kitchen or spend all your spare time in it.

There is no cooking grease to be had here now, except rancid, so I had the country combed for butter and got seven pounds, about twenty cents a pound. Have just boiled it down and strained it. Got enough hair out of it to make a wig, plus leaves and sticks, but it is sweet and, as Baker says, it couldn't be dirtier than grease.

Roghan, from the tail of the fat-tailed sheep raised in Afghanistan, is practically the only grease used for cooking

purposes. It is more like an oil and has not the tallowy taste of ordinary mutton fat. There is very little butter. Of course, no lard is used because the pig is considered an unclean animal by Mussalmans.

In Kabul last month when Nasrullah Khan, the Amir's brother, bought up all the roghan on the market, the price went up to over fifty cents a pound, making it prohibitive for any but the well-to-do. After the people had complained to the Amir, His Majesty broke the corner by sending men and pack animals up into the Hazara country to buy roghan for the Kabul market. It would seem that he feared to use stronger measures against his brother, the naib-us-sultana, who a short time before had made a similar corner on kerosene.

The next thing we are going to run out of is potatoes, and there is no remedy for over three months, except rice. Now ask me why we don't plant potatoes and other vegetables. I'll bet we have a lot more food trouble than you do—only we do not make a fuss over it.

Afghanistan has probably suffered less from the war and high prices than the other nations. Food prices have gone up, although it seems to be rather from the general upward trend than from any effect of the war. Eggs have advanced from three and four up to six and seven cents a dozen, mutton from four to five and six cents a pound. Chickens, that used to cost eight cents apiece, have risen to twelve and sixteen cents and even higher in the cities. Sugar and cotton cloth, together with other imported goods, have trebled in price. Kerosene is very high. But these articles are not used by the poorer people. Kabul prices for wood this winter are over a cent a pound, and double that for charcoal at prevailing exchange—it is difficult to get wood for cooking. A kabuli rupee is worth about thirty cents in gold now. This increased price, due to the rise in silver, has increased postage to just under seventy cents an ounce.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 18 May

There is always a bit of fantasy in these people that is as old and strange as *The Arabian Nights*—and while their stories are incongruous, the characters are real. For instance, we have an old mirza on watch at the plant nights, who lives in a nearby village. Every evening, armed with an old horse pistol and guarded by a couple of men on foot carrying spears, he rides in after dark, and with amusing concern tells tales of seeing giants and monsters on the road. The mirzas, although shaitans themselves, are a weak and cowardly lot.

We are still wrestling with the turbines—water-jacketing the bearings now or rather trying to, for it is almost impossible to get anything to work with. I'm like Baker; I do not curse them any more because I can't think of any new words. Baker wants to get the men who sold the apparatus up here, and then go away and leave them.

The Amir paid us a short visit a week ago, for the first time in over a year. He brought with him an Englishman, Sir Alexander McRobert, head of the Cawnpore Woolen Mills, who was looking for possible extensions for his company. Unfortunately His Majesty was here only a few hours, but we ran a machine for him and did what we could to make him understand what we are up against. His Majesty said, "Try to do the best you can. That is all we can do." He was in a hurry to get away.

When I found that he was not staying, I got in a few complaints. All over in ten minutes—he gave me an order to have the place cleared of soldiers and took over the case of my cook, who has been sent to Kabul to be tried. I have made out the indictment, not because I wanted to but because there was nothing else to be done.

I have one engineer arriving this week. No prospect of getting more. If the plant were ready today, there would not be enough men here to run it.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 14 June 1918

Mirza M'd Khan, Sarishtadar
Jabal-us-Siraj
DEAR SIR:

Kawus Khan told Mr. Burnham yesterday that Mr. Burnham's Hindustani cook had proposed to murder the three of us here, that this was a week or ten days ago, and that you had been informed. You are the responsible man in charge here. Kawus is one of your assistants. Why have you done nothing? Why have you said nothing about it to us? And do you think it is good to have said nothing about it? Will you please let us have your explanation and answer.

This cook agreed to work for a year, but of course he can't stay now. His chits, together with the agreement made by Mr. Dean, remain with Mr. Dean in Peshawar. I learn from Mr. Burnham that he did not want to stay in Afghanistan and has been asking leave to return to India for some time, saying that his boy was sick in the hospital and other excuses.

I am asking you to please keep him in charge until you can inform His Majesty of the circumstances, also H.H. the Prince, and get an order for his going to Peshawar.

Yours truly,
A. C. JEWETT

Jabal-us-Siraj, 17 June 1918

Mirza M'd Khan, Sarishtadar
Kabul
DEAR SIR:

I am enclosing two letters, one for His Majesty and one for H.H. the muin-us-sultana, in order that you may have the information contained therein. Please hand them to Azimoolah Khan, have him sign the enclosed receipt, and return it to me.

You wrote of sending more carpenters from Kabul. I think

you should send four, or get them from the Ark. I do not expect the woodwork for the remainder of the roof to be ready until after Ramazan, even if we get more carpenters. You will probably have to get an order from His Majesty for the rest of the material, which we will need before you return. I did not know until yesterday that you had been ill.

We have one gate in place and nearly ready to rivet today. The holes will have to be reamed out where we took off the flanges from the pipe to get it in exact line and make a watertight joint; also, we will have to lengthen some of the big three-quarter-inch rivets. All this extra work takes time, but had to be done. You will understand when you see it.

What a pity His Majesty delayed the firmans for getting out men. They would have been here now. Someday Afghanistan will learn that procrastination costs money and makes a lot of trouble.

I suppose His Majesty will want me to stay the four months. I'd like to go tomorrow. And if His Majesty does nothing, things will be just the same at the end of the four months. No men to operate with.

Please own receipt of this letter. I am glad to hear that you are better.

Yours truly,
A. C. Jewett

The Code of the Kingdom

Jabal-us-Siraj, 25 June 1918

HERE is an excerpt from a letter I have just finished writing to Mirza M'd Khan, the sarishtadar at Kabul. It may be of interest to you:

About the three students, Habibur Rahman, Mohammad Ishaq, and Mohammad Hassan: it is well that you have them, better if they will take an interest in learning something. Send them along and we will try them. I have been hoping ever since I came here to find some Afghans with ambition enough to learn something about His Majesty's work. Up to now I have seen none.

Please tell the students for me that if they will really try to learn, Mr. Baker and I will help them in every way; and that if they will realize it, there is as good an opportunity to learn right here as in any foreign school.

A man cannot be fed knowledge with a spoon; he has to work for it himself. One fault with all those who have been here is that they neither write anything down nor trouble themselves to remember, and never ask any questions. This shows they have no interest in the work. Tell them to ask questions and to keep on asking questions; knowing the names of things is nothing. If a man learns to say "this is a voltmeter and this is an ammeter," and does not know what the instruments are for, what they do, or how they are connected, what does the knowing of the names amount to? Nothing, worse than nothing!

Tell them too that in my country or Europe, when a student finishes school, he is just beginning to learn. Generally he has to work as a helper for three or four years at small pay before he is worth anything. A young man in my coun-

try would think he was very lucky if he were given an opportunity like this.

The first thing I am going to try to teach them is to use their eyes to see straight. Tell each to bring a blank book for making notes and sketches, one that can be carried in the pocket. There is no shame in not knowing anything, but there is great shame in remaining ignorant where there is opportunity to learn. I read recently a good quotation from the Arabic. Here it is:

He that knows not, and knows not that he knows not, is a fool.

Pass him by.

He that knows not and knows that he knows not is worthy.

Teach him.

The old Arabs knew a thing or two, you see.

We will finish one section of the roof, sixteen feet long, tomorrow to see if it is waterproof — inshallah. One thing is certain, the roof has been trouble enough. Hurry up and get well!

Yours truly,
A. C. Jewett

Well! The six graduates who came from Habeebiya College, ages ranging from twenty to thirty-five, have been going to school for ten years. One of them has studied medicine, but says he does not care to be a doctor. The others are engineers, maybe. They speak a little English, two of them fairly well, and know a smattering of algebra and geometry.

We sent two away after a ten days' trial as hopeless; they had learned a bit, parrot-wise, and if taken away from a book were all at sea. Having learned neither to study nor to reason, they tried to guess at things. When I asked one of them which was greater, one half or five eighths, he said, "Half, of course." Vulgar fractions generally stumped them, yet they said they could square a circle and figure the solid

contents of a sphere. But when I asked them to—in the penstock, which was six feet in diameter and six hundred feet long—the answer of one of them was not equal to the weight of two cubic feet of water. The point is, he could not see that this was wrong. Another was several million pounds wrong in the opposite direction, because of the misplacement of the decimal point. Still another told me that when he first went to school and was told that the world was round, he thought it was an awful lie but finally convinced himself that it was so. I drilled them for days on series and parallel electrical connections and had them make the actual connections and demonstrate the reasons, and while they knew for the moment, in three days they had forgotten everything.

It has been hard enough to train these boys in the engineering way they should go, but the work has been even more complicated by the sappers and miners, who do the manual labor (the little that is done). I have had men who had tightened up thousands of bolts on the transmission towers and had done other mechanical work; none of them ever knew whether a nut was tightened by turning it right or left, nor did they ever learn. I joked my sarishtadar about it one day, and he said it is the custom in Afghanistan to try it first to see which way it turned. I spoke of this to the colonel who was directly in charge of the Kabul shops, and he said, "I have men who have been here thirty years and they do not know."

Someone has said that westerners can never fathom the Oriental mind or method of thought, the reasoning and mental processes being so different. I cannot say what the Oriental's thought process is, but I do know what it is like. The average Afghan's mental development seems to have stopped at about the age of fourteen. In some ways the Afghans are a lot like very bad children. Personally, I much prefer the absolute barbarian from the fields or mountains. He's a liar and a thief, but a much better man physically

and morally than the town walla who tucks his shirt inside his trousers and can write with a pen.

The Kabulis are a lazy, lying, thieving, licentious lot. They are cowards too; the barbarians are far better fighters and better men all around. Afghans swear "ba chashm" (by my eyes). The Kabulis are such noted liars that "By the eyes of a Kabuli?" is a byword among them. When one asks, "By the eyes of a Kabuli?" a man will protest, or grin sheepishly and say that he is swearing by his own eyes—"har du," both of them.

Kabulis say of themselves that they invented cursing, and when quarreling call each other vile names that would cause a fight or death elsewhere. These epithets are so constantly on their lips that they have lost all meaning. Even children use them. A small boy, following on foot to urge on the donkey his mother is riding, will keep up a constant stream of abuse. I have always compared Kabul with Sodom, taking the Bible for what Sodom was like. Kabul cannot be worse, nor any better.

Although the Afghan is lazy, the herders and tillers put in long hours in the fields; they have to eat, and besides, an Afghan will work for himself where he will not for another. He is a thief and a liar, without honor, treacherous, and utterly faithless even to his own kind, and he admits it himself. In spite of all their surface politeness, I must confess that I have found the Afghan on the whole lazy, ignorant, arrogant, and utterly vain. He is cruel, has little pity, and is seemingly without gratitude. Someone wrote that the only good quality he has is a sort of patriotism, which more often than not takes the form of treachery. They only hang together when they are fighting beyond their borders.

Afghans are fond of their children, and members of the better class deny them nothing. A wolf is fond of its whelps and plays with them, but when the whelps attain their growth they fight the parent wolves. So with the Afghans.

And yet with the poorer people and those who do not live in the city it is a bit different. A man with several sons is always safer than one without, for if he were killed the murderer would have to reckon with the sons. They would get him sometime; it is the code.

I have called them all the bad Persian names in my vocabulary. I have worked with them and tried to improve them, thrashed them, and put them in chains. I have had their pay raised — the only way of getting it done is to speak directly to the Amir, something no Afghan would trouble to do, if he dared. I have slept in their homes, dined with them Afghan fashion, doctored them, and tried to educate them — to what avail?

Afghanistan is taking up western education, in a small way to be sure, but it will come in time, and the educated devil is going to be harder to deal with than the uneducated one. He is going to be a problem in the years to come, for it will take more generations to make an honest man of him than it will to teach him reading, writing, and arithmetic. At present the Afghan is way back in the time of Moses, as far as his customs and thoughts go.

He knows nothing of geography or the world outside his own ring of mountains. The camel driver sees a little of India, Persia, and Bokhara. There is not one in a thousand that knows there is such a country as the United States. One man asked me if they had horses in England. When I said, "Yes, why?" he replied that he did not think there was room enough for them to graze. I have read to them the number of casualties, according to the lists given in the English papers, and they have said it was a lie, because if there were that many people killed there would be no one left in the whole world.

Kismet

Jabal-us-Siraj, 10 November 1918

LAST June I sent in my resignation to His Majesty, dating it from the first of July to give four months' notice as per agreement, if required by H.M. Pleaded that my private affairs compelled me to insist on going; and, also, that I had come here for three years only and had been here over seven. I got no reply.

The plant could have been started one year ago in spite of war delays and poor layout, if His Majesty had not delayed and neglected to sign firmans. Except for connecting up some motors in Kabul, the plant was ready; the powerhouse was completed, the transformers filled with oil, the machines tested and operated in October. I wrote again to H.M. asking if he wished to have the official opening of the powerhouse he mentioned when last here. No answer.

When my four months were up I quit, turned over my drawings to Baker, and began to pack up. My sarishtadar said he would see H.M., and brought me word that I should wait a few days before coming to Kabul, because His Majesty was not feeling well enough to do business. When I came to Kabul he would grant me leave.

There was a severe epidemic of influenza in Kabul, with as many as 155 deaths a day, and just at this time Baker took a chill. I had the sarishtadar telephone H.M. to send out a doctor. The second assistant surgeon, Sultan Mohammad, came with instructions to stay five days. This man was worse than no doctor, I think. He mixed elaborate prescriptions — thirteen different drugs in one mix, more if he had them. He was treating Baker for influenza, but when I asked him, on the third day, if it wasn't typhoid pneumonia, he said that it was.

Baker got steadily worse. The doctor flunked completely, and I told the sarishtadar to ask H.M. for a better one. Dr. Ghulam Mohammad came out in a car on the third of November (guess he was as good as any). He was advised to stay three days, confirmed the typhoid pneumonia, and changed the medicine. Baker was delirious every day. Every time he was a bit easy the doctor said he was over it. The second day the doctor was here, he and the sarishtadar proposed taking Baker to Kabul in a car. Fine for a man who could not sit up—all because they wanted to go back to Kabul themselves. They came to me just after a session with Baker in his delirium, and told me the doctor's three days were up. What did I think of his going back? I said that if they thought of going, I'd telephone Halliday to go straight to H.M. to tell him that Baker still needed a doctor. God! If anyone could ever deal with these people!

Sword, a young Scotchman working for H.M. in Kabul, came out on his motorcycle to see how we were, and brought his servant in the sidecar to leave with us. Thoughtful of him—I couldn't go to the telephone without waking Burnham to relieve me. Baker is a strong man and has never been sick before—would be hard to manage if he weren't so weak.

I have to see to the milk, soup, boiled water, and the like. That sounds easy to one who does not know the conditions. These people do not know the meaning of cleanliness or sanitation—nor the doctors, even the best. They never sterilize a thermometer, they pick things up off the floor, use any old rag, wipe spoons, cups, plates without washing them. It is impossible to guard against infection with such servants.

At present I do not let Baker's dishes go from the room—wash them myself, and have his towels and clothes boiled in front of me. The dhoby has bolted with our week's wash. Am going to try to get on the trail of the clothes—possibly in his house. A sapper and miner is doing our washing. I sit on the stairs to watch and instruct him, and listen to Baker.

From where I sit I can see them planting the elect over on a hillside. The influenza has struck here and they are dying like flies. Just how many or what the percentage, no one knows. They are left to themselves. Asked our doctor, Ghulam Mohammad, if he were treating any. He said there was not so much medicine; he would not trouble anyway, unless forced to. It is Kismet and the will of Allah.

The doctor has been here three times today, and changed the medicine this morning. The sarishtadar came over too. When he was leaving he said, "You always criticize our saying 'Inshallah.' Now you can see, you and I expected to be in Kabul by the first of November. You would have had leave to go home. Now Baker is sick and we are both here. Kismet!"

Slept badly myself last night, been on the hop all day. Had Abdul Aziz spank the cook with a barrel stave. When the milk came it was short, and I think he stole it; he lied, anyway. Also I had him wash his hands, for the first time in two weeks I think. Looks bad for Baker tonight. I'm tired and may be needed at any time.

My object in writing is this. If I were taken down like Baker, suddenly, there would be no record for my people, except secondhand. (Anyone reading this, please remember I'm tired out watching and am constantly interrupted. Writing seems to fill in odd moments and keeps my mind occupied.) I'm not afraid of dying, but I do want to live to get home. And again, this is an awfully interesting time to leave the world, just when such tremendous events are taking place. We have had telegrams up to the twenty-eighth of October, and peace is without question only a matter of time. The changes that are shortly to come about will be far-reaching.

Jabal-us-Siraj, 23 November 1918

After sixteen days, Baker died quietly — his heart just gave out, I think. H.M. ordered that the body was not to come to

Kabul, but should be taken by takht-i-rawan via the Tangeh-gharu trail to Peshawar. Seems it must be cased in two sealed metal caskets in order to comply with down country regulations, typhoid pneumonia being a contagious disease.

My transport ponies were ready to take me down when Baker took sick. H.M. had sent word he would give me leave. I must stay here, now, and make arrangements for the electric plant. I have had sixteen days of twelve- or fourteen-hour shifts and am dead tired with strain. Had to keep the doctor, the servants, and the rest going.

I started them on a wooden box here. It has a soldered one inside, made of galvanized iron roofing. Halliday telephoned that he would send copper to make another outside this, and that Sword would come out here on his motorcycle. The copper sheeting came late that same evening, but the coppersmith sent with it was no good. My blacksmith and men did most of the work of forming the sheets, and I did the soldering. It took us till ten in the evening to solder the lids of the inner and outer cases—a difficult job.

Sword has been fine and a splendid help, and my blacksmith and other men have worked all hours. The takht-i-rawan came—two poles and a little coop on top. Got some teak planks from an old crate, screwed them across the poles, and covered this with an old tent and strips of leather to keep the copper from chafing. When Halliday, Oram, McLaughlin, and Sutcliffe arrived by car, we had a prayer and then carried the body down two flights of narrow winding stairs. It was placed on the takht-i-rawan. I think we did the best possible job, which will surely be needed for it is a rough trail. They are going by the Tangeh-gharu, the old road.

Burnham was good and faithful but has gone to pieces. I had to get him together so that he could go to Peshawar where Baker is to be buried. Had to help him pack his things and arrange everything, even to saddling his horse. He told

me that Baker was his brother-in-law; I did not know this before. Got him off on the fifteenth. He's not coming back—absolutely finished.

Now I have to put in order all my things that Baker took over, as well as the government work, and then go to Kabul to see H.M. and arrange to leave. Sword tells me his time was up six weeks ago, and he asked for leave but has had no reply. A letter from Dr. Addison* came in just as we were returning to the fort. He promised to see that the General Electric Company gave me every help. Has evidently learned something of my letters to the company that I may be detained here indefinitely—for years. The Amir does not wish me to leave. It was a good letter and I was glad to get it.

Halliday and Sword stayed overnight. Now I'm very much alone. Went to the powerhouse, dam, and canal with the sarishtadar to take some pictures, then distributed old dishes and things remaining in the kitchen among the sappers and miners. Started packing my things today. Will send everything a couple of days' ahead and then motor to Kabul.

Kabul, 8 December 1918

When I came to leave, my sappers and miners waited on me, and some of them brought me little presents. The ones who could not afford much helped me load my animals, and some of them followed a bit on foot, and rubbed their faces against my hands when they said goodbye. It could not have been all insincere and I am rather proud of it.

Left the morning of the twenty-third with the sarishtadar, and arrived at the Baber Sarai about noon. Opened my kit and got organized a bit. Presently the sarishtadar brought word that H.M. would see me in a day or two; that he was suffering from a cold and his lip was sore. This was just an excuse, for he was running all over the place. Heard that he

*Dr. Thomas D. Addison, Pacific coast manager of the General Electric Company. (Editor's note.)

is to be married shortly. One of his wives, mother of the heir apparent, died about the same time Baker did.

No word came until December 7, when the sarishtadar reported that H.M. would see me in the morning at the Mehman Khana Koti. Finally, after waiting five months, I was to see the Amir.

The next day I went to the koti. Waited two hours before H.M. came; then he was busy with something in the next room for forty-five minutes. After the usual inquiries after health, H.M. expressed regret over Baker's death and talked of Kismet. It was not until he had thanked me for my work that I reminded him I had had no reply to my letter of resignation.

"But I sent word through my son, the prince, that he would settle it when he came to Jabal-us-Siraj. Sickness prevented his coming." An Afghan of the Afghans, and yet there is no better man, or one near as good, for his place. Ever since I mentioned leaving he has avoided seeing me, for fear I might resign. Only after great insistence on my part, and considerable delay on his, did he finally issue a permit for me to leave the country. He said, "I will grant you leave according to agreement, and I thank you for what you have done, but I am sorry you are going away." Then we said goodbye, and I left the room.

The Amir was really displeased. Just the mere fact of not wanting to work for him for life, when he, a king, desired it, was a crime in his eyes. I had His Majesty's confidence; he always treated me with courtesy and favored me with many personal kindnesses, and never refused me anything I needed in connection with my work. After his fashion he gave me the best assistance he could. But nothing could induce me to remain. I think my eight years in Afghanistan have been enough for any man.

Tamam Shud

Jalalabad, 27 December 1918

WHEN they heard that I was leaving, my students came to say goodbye and told me my golden words would remain in their hearts forever. This was, of course, what the Afghans call "handing flowers"; besides, they wanted to see if I had any books to give away. Still I am very pleased that they did come. My sarishtadar, Mirza M'd, who has been fine all the way through, arranged to see the prince and to have the government papers, drawings, and invoices turned over to Azimoolah.

Several days passed while I waited at Baber Sarai. Then Kawus Khan and two others came on the eighteenth with all of my salary, back to the first of August. My yabus were ready and the mehmandar said that they would be around in the morning, but it was snowing and it snowed all the next day as well. Mirza M'd, who was leaving for Jabal-us-Siraj and would not see me again, came to give me an old Afghan knife and a remembrance cloth of camel's or goat's hair from Kabul.

I finally got away on the twenty-first of December. The guard came at noon, and when the yabus arrived two hours later, I said goodbye to Sword, Oram, and the rest at Baber and started on my last trek to India.

It was cold and dark when we got to Butkhak. Twice yabus fell into the ditch alongside the road, and one pack animal could not stand. At Khakijabar there was snow about fourteen inches deep. After a long trek down through the mountains, we left the snow and arrived at Nimlah at noon on Christmas day. Several carriages and a motor truck of ladies on their way to Jalalabad had stopped there for the

night. The next morning we got away at five, and after a double march reached Jalalabad sooner than I expected.

Dr. Farzana Ali is here in the mehman khana on his way back from leave in India. We passed the time of day and talked a bit about our leaves and the condition of the roads. It was good to see him and to speak English again. My mehmandar wants to go to Basawal tomorrow; it would be easier to stop at Botti-kot. But another long march will be the last, inshallah.

Fresno, California, 24 February 1919

On April 23, one month after I left India, His Majesty was assassinated while sleeping in his tent near Laghman in the mountains. With him was a large retinue of sardars, including his brother, Nasrullah Khan, his eldest son, Inayatullah Khan, and Nadir Shah, commander in chief of the Afghan army. They were encamped in one of His Majesty's gardens, and the tent was guarded by soldiers and five ghulam bachas, who took turns during the night.

Nasrullah Khan, the naib-us-sultana, proclaimed himself Amir at Jalalabad. His reign was a short one, for the Amir's third son, Amanullah Khan, who was in Kabul at the time of his father's assassination, won over the troops and nobles to his cause. It came off successfully, since he had the advantage of the treasury and of the guns and ammunition stored in the capital, and his uncle and two elder brothers hastened to acknowledge his power. In public durbar Nasrullah was convicted of having instigated the murder and was sentenced to life imprisonment.

His Majesty Habibullah Khan was the fairest and most capable Afghan I have met. He had a forceful personality, a large fund of general knowledge, and a fine retentive memory. He governed not as he wished but as he could, in a constant atmosphere of intrigue and conspiracy. If he had had a few good advisers and some strong and loyal men about him, he could have done more. The resident Europeans and

the better Afghans, alike, after condemning him for his faults, would unite in saying that he was by all odds the best man in the country to be its ruler.

Habibullah's father, Abdur Rahman, speaking of the son who was to succeed him, wrote in his autobiography that Habibullah would have to be diligent, steadfast, and hard working to rule the country successfully; if he were bent only on his own pleasure he would lose both his throne and his life. How well the old man knew his Afghans!

Glossary

(P) Persian (A) Arabic (H) Hindustani (AI) Anglo-Indian

abbasi (A), coin worth five and one-half cents
Adam astam (P), I am a man
Afghani (P), pertaining to Afghanistan; native of Afghanistan; loosely, Pushtu
ahangar (P), blacksmith
al-hamdu lillah (A), praise to God
Al Hijra (A), Mohammed's flight from Mecca
Allahu akbar (A), God is greater
ande (H), eggs
arghavan (P), purple; a purple mountain flower
ark (P), citadel; enclosure containing the government buildings
ashikaqassi huzuri (P), court minister (no longer used)
ashikaqassi kharaji, foreign secretary in the time of the Amirs (no longer used)
ashikaqassi mulki, secretary of the kingdom or home secretary (no longer used)
ashna (P), friend

baba (P), grandfather
babu (H), clerk; Hindu gentleman
bacha (P), child
ba chashm, har du (P), by my eyes, both
ba chashm-i-Kabuli (P), by the eye of a Kabuli, an oath like "by the beard of the Prophet"
bagh (P), garden
baghban (P), gardener
Bagh-i-Shahi (P), King's Garden
Bakra Id (A), sacrifice festival
baksheesh (P), gift, gratuity
Baluchi, a native of Baluchistan
bandi (P), custody, keeping; literally, in jail
bara-i-Khuda (P), for the sake of God
barat (P), treasury note
bargh (P), lightning
basi salaams (P), many compliments
bazaar (P), market place
Beg, a title (Turkish)
Bekhair asti? (P), Are you well?
bhang (H), narcotic made from dried hemp leaves and seed capsules (P, bang)
bigar (P), forced labor
birgat, brigadier (Afghan corruption)
birinj (P), rice
Bisyar digh shudam az Afghanistan (P), My heart is sore about Afghanistan
bisyar khub chiz (P), very good thing
budmash (AI), rascal (P, badma'sh)

This glossary includes only the word forms as they appeared in the book. No attempt has been made to list all the alternative spellings and meanings. The language from which the words come has been indicated except where the origin is not clear and well defined. (Editor's note.)

bund (AI), artificial embankment, as a dam or dike (P, band)
bundobust (AI), arrangements, settlement (P, bandobast)
bunnias, banias (AI), money changers; money lenders
burka (A), curtain; long veil worn by native women
butparast (P), idol worshipper

chaman (P), field
chapan, heavy overcoat with long sleeves used by shepherds
chaprasi (H), messenger or servant wearing an official badge
charak (P), weight equivalent to one-fourth seer
charas (H), Indian bhang or hemp (P, chars)
charmaghz (P), walnut
charpai (H), a string bedstead
Chi guft? (P), What did he say?
Chihil Sutun (P), Forty Pillars
chihil u du (P), forty-two
chillum (H), hookah containing tobacco and burning charcoal; the act of burning it
chinar (P), Oriental plane tree
chit (AI), a short letter or note; certificate of character
chota hazri (AI), small breakfast
chupatty (AI), griddlecake made of unleavened bread in India
commidant, commandant (Kohistani corruption)

dak (H), transport of mail by a relay of runners
dak bangala (AI), travelers' rest house provided by the government
dak laid (AI), to lay a dak or a relay of horses on the road
dakie (AI), mail carrier
dalw (P), bucket; sign of Aquarius from the old Persian solar calendar
dasht (P), desert; plain
dawa (A), medicine
deh (P), village
Deh Bala (P), Upper Village
dehati (P), country people
Dehra Dun, district in the Meerut division, British India
dhoby (H), washerman
divana (P), crazy
Divana, laikan bi kar-i-khud hushyar (P), Crazy, but in his own interest wise
dudh (H), milk
duffadar (H), petty officer in native army
dukan (P), shop
dukandar (P), shopkeeper
durbar (AI), audience hall; court (P, darbar)
durbar-i-bandi, criminal court

fana (P), wedge
faqir (A), Mohammedan religious beggar
farangi (P), a European
farash (P), literally, spreader of carpets; servant in charge of tents and furniture
Farwary, February (Afghan corruption)
fil bashi (P), master of the elephant
firman (P), royal order

gari kesh (P), wagon driver
Ghalat khardam (P), I made a mistake
ghazi (A), religious fanatic; slayer of infidels
ghee (AI), butter
ghulam bacha (P), literally, slave boy; a page of the royal household

Gilgit, outlying province in northwest India
gilkar (P), mud worker
godown dar, warehouse keeper
gulkhana (P), flower house
gusfand (P), sheep
Gusfand Rah (P), Sheep's Road
gusht-i-gusfand (P), mutton

Habibullah (A), beloved of God
hajji (A), Muslim who has made a pilgrimage to Mecca
hakim (A), literally, learned one; Mohammedan physician
hamal (A), ram; sign of the Zodiac from the old Persian solar calendar
hammam (A), bathhouse
haram sarai (P), women's quarters
haram-zada (P), base-born; rascal
havildar (AI), sergeant in the native army
Hazara, Mongolian
hezar (P), one thousand
hich (P), a negative
Hindi (P), Hindustani
hookah, an Oriental pipe in which the smoke passes through water (P, hukka)
hukm (A), order
Hukm nist (P), It is not the order
husaini (P), variety of white grape
huzuri (P), title of respect equivalent to "Your Honor"

Id (A), festival, holiday
Id-i-Qurban (A), sacrifice festival
ilchi (P), envoy
Inglis mardum (P), Englishmen
inshallah (A), if God wills
In sowt chiye? (P), What noise is this?

jashn (P), festival
jezail, an Afghan rifle
jinn (P), demon, bad spirit
Jor asti? (P), Are you well?
Juma'h (A), Friday
Jumad al Awwal (A), fifth month of the Mohammedan calendar
Jumad al Sani (A), sixth month of the Mohammedan calendar
juy (P), brook, stream

kabob (P), cubes of meat roasted on a skewer
kabr (P), grave
kafila (P), caravan
kafir (A), infidel, unbeliever
kahgil (P), mud mixed with chopped straw
kal'ah (P), fort
kamarband (P), sash
kaptan (H), officer in the native army
kariz (P), irrigation canal
karo (H), make
karwar (P), weight equivalent to eighty seers; 1280 pounds
khabardar (P), take care
khaja (P), master or gentleman, title of respect
Khalil ullah Jan, Sweet Friend of God
khan (P), literally, lord or prince; title now commonly applied to dignitaries of various rank
khansaman (H and P), house steward, butler
kharaji (A), foreigner
kharbuza (P), variety of muskmelon
khas (P), thorn; base person
khassadars (AI), native guards or troops; tribal levies
khawanin (P), lords or khans
khazanadar (P), treasurer
Khost, district fifty miles south of Kabul

Khub jor asti? (P), Are you very well?
khubber (AI), news (P, khabar)
Khuda hafiz (P), God keep you; goodbye
kishmish-i-sabz (P), green raisin
kishmish-i-surkh (P), red raisin
kismet (A), fate
Kohistan (P), land of mountains
kokab (P), star
Koochi (PUSHTU), gypsy
kot hawalahdar (P), policeman
Koti-dil-Kusha, Building that Expands the Heart
Koti Setareh, "Star of Houses"
Koti Shahi, King's House
kotwal (P), chief of police; town magistrate
kran (P), coin worth six shahi
kroh, measure of length equivalent to 1.83 miles
Kufic, early Arabic alphabet
kuhna (P), old
kulang (P), pick; crane
Kunar, district in eastern Afghanistan
kushi, (AI) happy, used as an adjective in India (P, khushi, Are you satisfied?)
kutcha (AI), makeshift, crude

lakh (H), one hundred thousand
lakri (H), wood
lungi (P), long piece of cloth; turban

mahsel (A), tax collector; his party may include soldiers and cattle
malik (A), provincial governor
Manda na bashi (P), May you not be tired
manghal (P), brazier for burning charcoal
mardum (P), man; mankind
masahati (P), surveyor
masjid (A), mosque
mehman (P), guest
mehman khana (P), guest house
mehmandar (P), guest entertainer; host
mehtar (P), groom
mem-sahib (H), madam
meskal (A), weight equivalent to approximately one sixth of an ounce
Midanam angusht-i-oo bisyar sakht ast (P), I know his fingers are very hard
mihrabani-i-Khuda (P), kindness of God
mirza (P), common title of honor
mistri (H), master workman, foreman
mohr (P), seal
Mubarak bashi (P), May you be blessed
Muharram (A), festival; first month of the Mohammedan calendar
muin-us-sultana (A), assistant of the kingdom, a title
mullah (P), holy man learned in the law and teachings of Islam
murghabi (P), waterfowl; wild duck
murghi (H), chicken (P, murgh)
Muslim (A), Moslem
mussak (A), goat or cattle skin blown full of air (P, mashk)
Mussalman (A), Mohammedan
Mustofi-al-Mamalik (A), controller of the kingdom

naib salar (P), lieutenant general
naib-us-sultana (A), deputy of the kingdom, title
najjar (P), carpenter
namak (P), salt
nan (P), bread
nautch (AI), entertainment, chiefly by dancing

neem-charak (P), weight equivalent to half a charak
niks (A), poor
nishan (P), seal; coat of arms
nishan-i-dolat (P), seal of the kingdom
No Ruz (P), New Year's Day
nullah (AI), ravine or gorge; water course, especially a dry one

octroi, tax on provisions brought into town
Olya Hazrat (P), Her Royal Highness

pahlavan (P), fighting man; hero; wrestler
Pai Minar (P), foot of the Minaret
pari (P), elf or fairy descended from fallen angels, excluded from paradise till penance is accomplished (according to Persian mythology)
Parsee (P), the Persian language; a Zoroastrian of India
pashm bafi (P), woolen mills
payrah (P), guard
pesh-khidmat (P), domestic servant; originally front servant or butler
pice (H), coin worth one sixtieth of a rupee
pilau (P), rice boiled with meat or fowl
pirahan (P), shirt; coat
pishak (P), slang for gurbeh or cat
pucka (AI), good of its kind; thoroughgoing; genuine
Pushtu, the native language of southern and eastern Afghanistan, parts of India, and Baluchistan
pustin (P), a sheepskin coat

qazi (A), judge
Queen Sultana (A), queen mother

Rabi'ul Akhir (A), fourth month of the Mohammedan calendar
Rabi'ul Awwal (A), third month of the Mohammedan calendar
Rajab (A), seventh month of the Mohammedan calendar
Ramazan (A), month of fast; ninth month of the Mohammedan calendar
ressala (AI), native irregular cavalry; a cavalryman
rish safed (P), white beard
roghan (P), grease
Roorkee, town in British India, headquarters of the Congo canal workshops and of the Bengal sappers and miners
rukhsat (P), leave; permission to retire
rupee (H), coin worth sixteen cents
ruza (P), fast

Sa'di, Persian poet
Safar (A), second month of the Mohammedan calendar
sag adam (P), dog man
sag mahi (P), dog fish
sahib (A), master, sir, a title of respect
Salaam aleikum (A), Peace be with you
salmi, grain raised without irrigation
sandali (P), chair
sannar (P), slang for sad dinar, a coin worth one hundredth of a nickel
sappers and miners, native workers organized after the native engineer corps in British India
sarai (P), rest house; inn; a karawan sarai
sarai bashi (P), keeper of a sarai
sardar (P), leader, chief, a title

sarishtadar (P), head of a native staff
sarkar (P), government, supreme authority, a title
sarkari (P), head work or government work
seer (H), an Afghan weight equivalent to 15.6 pounds
sepoy (AI), native soldier
serang (AI), commander (P, sarhang)
Sha'ban (A), the eighth month of the Mohammedan calendar
shagird (P), apprentice
shahi (P), a coin worth one twelfth of a rupee
shahqassi (P), His Majesty's secretary (a title no longer used)
shah tut (P), king mulberry, a variety of mulberry
shaitan (P), satan; evil spirit; devilish person
shaitani (P), deviltry
shakar (H and P), sugar
shakh i Umar (P), branch or horn of Umar; horn among Shiahs
shamianah (P), canopy or large tent with open sides
sharbat (P), drink made of fruit juices
Shawwal (A), tenth month of the Mohammedan calendar
sheikh (A), elder or chief of a village
Shiah (A), sect of Muslims
shikast (P), broken
Shinwari, tribe living near the Khyber
shipish (P), lice
shutur (P), camel (used north of the Khyber)
shutur gharz (P), camel grudge
sihak (P), small triangle
Siraj ul Akhbar (A), Light of the News
Siraj-ul-Imarat (A), Light of the Buildings
Siraj-ul-Millat-i-Waddin (A), Light of the Nation and Faith
sowar (AI), trooper, mounted orderly (P, sawar)
subadar (AI), native officer
sumana (A), variety of quail
Sunni (A), Muslim sect
Swat, Mohammedan people of the North West Frontier Province
syce (AI), groom

tabla (P), small drum
takht-i-rawan (P), litter
taklif (A), ceremony, trouble
talkh (P), bitter
talkhan, mulberry flour; small cakes made from it
Tamam shud (P), It is finished
tamasha (P), entertainment, show
tambur (P), musical instrument; tambourine
tarbuza (P), watermelon
tarjuman (P), interpreter
tiffin (H), midday meal, lunch
tomban (P), white cotton trousers
tonga (AI), light two-wheeled vehicle
topi (H), sun helmet
tulwar (AI), curved saber used especially in North India
tumtum (AI), two-wheeled cart, lighter than a tonga
Turani (P), language of Turkish origin, used north of the Oxus in Turkestan
Turki (P), Turkish language
tut (P), mulberry

Uzbek, a member of the most civilized of the Turkic peoples of Turkestan, now a republic of the U.S.S.R.

Wa ba aleikum salaam (A), And with you peace
walla (AI), worker; servant; man or doer

yabu (P), strong hard pony bred in the mountains of Afghanistan
yakdan (P), mule or camel trunk made of leather
yakut (P), ruby

zambil (P), four-handled willow basket
zamindar (P), landed proprietor
zenana (P), harem
zilzila (P), earthquake
Zinda bashi (P), May you live
Zul Hijja (A), twelfth month of the Mohammedan calendar
Zul Ka'da (A), eleventh month of the Mohammedan calendar

U.S.S.R.
Chin
Iran
Afghanistan
N.W.F.P.
Kashmir
Pakistan
India
Saudi Arabia
Arabian Sea

GREENVILLE COLLEGE LIBRARY
915.8J55 C001
JEWETT, A C 1870 OR 71-1926
AN AMERICAN ENGINEER IN AFGHANISTA STX
3 4511 00084 4296